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SPOILS,
WON IN
THE DAY OF BATTLE;
AND DEDICATED TO THE USE OF THE
CHURCH OF CHRIST :

OR,
GOD'S GRACIOUS DEALINGS
WITH THE AUTHOR,

[FROM EIGHT YEARS OLD, TO TWENTY-NINE.]

FRANCIS HEWS,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, UNDER THE DIRECTION, AND BY
THE APPOINTMENT OF THE EVERLASTING GOD, OF
THE PARTICULAR BAPTIST CHURCHES, AT
DUNSTABLE AND WESTONING.

K.

*They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall
sing of thy righteousness. PSALM cxlv. 7.*

*Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath
done for my soul. PSALM lxxvi. 16.*

Fellow mortals in this world below,
What Jesus teaches, do you wish to know?
Then careful read what is contain'd in me,
Where mercy's manifested, you will see,
Unto a wretch, deserving nought but hell,
Yet spar'd, through grace, the Saviour's works to tell.

Bedford :

PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. WEBB;

May be had of the AUTHOR, at Dunstable; Mr. SLEAP, Chesham;
Mr. DIMOCK, Millbrook; Mr. J. G. MAILIN, Aylesbury;
Mess. COLLIS and Co. Kettering; and of Mrs. GURNEY,
No. 128, Holborn, London.

1799.

SPOLLS

WORKS

THE DAY OF BATTLE

AND DEDICATED TO THE USE OF THE
CHURCH OF CHRIST

OF

GOD'S GRACIOUS DEALINGS

WITH THE NATION

[FROM ABOUT 1600, TO THE PRESENT]

FRANCIS WELLS

Entered at Stationers Hall.

PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. WELLS

How many in the world believe
What I have said, do you who are
This present text what I have said
If more money is needed, you will see
That I am not, desiring nothing but
You should, I think, give the Nation's work

Printed:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. WELLS
At the Office of the Author, at Darnley, Mr. S. S. S. S. S.
The Printer, Mr. J. C. S. S. S. S. S.
The Author and Co. S. S. S. S. S. S.
No. 17, Darnley, London

TO THE READER.

READER! I'm now sent forth by *Francis Heres*,
He begs you'll read me kindly if you choose ;
He bids me steer my course, and traverse round,
Stay where a hearty welcome can be found :
Where not, remove, nor longer dare to stay,
But from contentious minds to make my way.
Thus I'd go round, and keep by wisdom's rule,
To prove to all, I came from Jesu's school :
And should you ask my birth or pedigree,
The answer 's left to him who sent out me.
'Tis mine to spread free grace, and that alone,
If mortals cavil, let them cavil on.
And if my heart-felt truths you should deny,
May cause you pain of heart, when e'er you die :
And when beyond the grave you do appear,
You'll see that truth which you denied here.
Conscience, when there, will act an honest part,
The truth of this feel every reader's heart.

TO THE READER

Work! I'm now sent forth by Providence
He begs you'll read me kindly if you choose
He bids me seek my course, and traverse round
Where a hearty welcome can be found
Where not removed, nor longer dare to stay
But from confusion minds to make my way
I'll go round, and keep by wisdom's side
To prove to all I truly mean to guide
And should you like my little book to see
I'll answer to you what you please
I'm sure to send you grace, and to the end
I'll remain as I am, for them shall send
And if my secret heart you should know
My heart is open to you, when you know
And when you read the lines, you do repeat
I'll see that truth which you desire to see
Conscience when there, will see no more part
The heart is his, for every reader's part

P R E F A C E.

COURTEOUS reader, my design, in thus appearing unto public view, is not to gain the caresses of any living on the earth; as may be easily perceived, by the way and manner in which I have singled myself from many, in point of conscience, in what I have wrote; and I am well aware, that many will censure me in what I have done, in every way that they can; but let them censure on. I have here sent forth to public view, the testimony of God, and the answer of a good conscience; disregardless of every mortal on earth, in point of seeking applause: and, whether they will regard it or not, so it is.

I laboured, for a long time, under very perplexed exercises of mind, about publishing the dealings of the Almighty with my soul; and, was so followed with scripture, and workings of conscience, leading me to do it; and such things from the Lord, when in prayer, respecting of it; that brought me, at length, to take my pen in hand, for the benefit of the souls of his people; and, I hope and trust, the glory of his blessed name: and I can truly say, from the first beginning unto the end, I have found a sweet satisfaction. Nor do I doubt, but it is according to the mind of my God, from the sweet and sensible enjoyment he has blessed me with, of his presence and love, all the time I have been about it; and sometimes, when I was writing some of his dealings with me, in times past, I was favoured with such feelings of gratitude and pleasure, and such heart-melting frames, as quite prevented my

my going on; and was obliged to sit, with my pen in my hand, and tears pouring down my face, for some time together. I wish my reader may have as much satisfaction in reading, as I had in writing, and then we shall bless the name of our God together, and give him the glory, that such things are made known under his teachings.

My reader must not expect to find the scholar, or look to see the man displayed, in this book; the Author's whole design being, to display the adorable Jesus, in his riches of grace and mercy. If any one says, its not wrote in that stile, as to suit the improved mind in learning, and may be exposed to the laughter of the wits of the age. I answer, it will not be the first time that such have laughed at that, which they understand not: nor have I considered myself as writing for the carnal mind's approbation, whether learned or ignorant;

ignorant ; but for the benefit of as many souls, as the divine spirit may see good to bless it unto. I do expect that many carnal professors, in the present day, and preachers too, of corrupt minds, destitute of experimental acquaintance with the truth, will stand opposed to what I have brought to light. But this will not terrify me, but rather afford me comfort ; for I should be sorry to have such an experience sent out, as to suit them : and whether it be liked or not, so it is ; and no one on earth can confute it, or beat it down, or disprove the truth of it. Should they say, its not true ; it will be in my power, from my own conscience, and the word of God, to prove they lie against the truth : for I can safely say of this, as Paul did of his ministry, that *I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.* Gal. i. 12. And I am well persuaded, that when it comes into
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the hands of true believers in Jesus, who have the light of the spirit in their minds, and the experience of Christians in their hearts, they will not need to ask from whence it came; for the feeblest child of God will see whose image and superscription it bears. Prov. xxvii. 19. *As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.* I wholly dedicate it to the use of the Redeemer's interest; to which, I pray the divine spirit abundantly to bless it, and my best desires will be all obtained. Farewell, reader, God bless you.

Your's to serve, with such as I have,

FRANCIS HEWS.

(7)
the hands of true believers in Jesus, who
have the light of the spirit in their minds,
and the experience of Christians in their
hearts, they will not need to ask them
whence it came; for the feeblest child of
God will see whose image and superimpo-
sition it bears. From every one of us
that earnestly to face, in the heart of man
to war. I wholly dedicate it to the use of
the Redeemer's interest; to witness, I pray
the divine spirit abundantly to bless it, and
my best desires will be all obtained. Fare-
well, reader, God bless you.

Yours to serve, with such as I have.

FRANCIS HEWES

S P O I L S, &c.

CHAP. I.

I, FRANCIS HEWS, was born *March* the 3d, in the year 1768, at *Alderbury*, in *Hertfordshire*; and lived to the age of eight years, without knowing any thing of the checks of conscience, that at this time I was made to know; which, since then, I have viewed as a preparatory step to further tokens of the divine favour; whose matchless grace I desire to leave on record, for the benefit of his dear church and people, when I am dead and gone.

Being born of carnal parents, and brought up with them, I was left to the sad practice of playing on the Lord's day, and which I was left with ease to do, until in the eighth year of my age. Being one Sabbath day evening at play, with my companions, in a meadow not far from my father's house;

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instantly

instantly my mind was impressed with a striking sense of the judgment day; I stopped my play, and mused awhile on what would become of me on that day, being, at the same time at a stand, in my mind, whether I should continue play or go home. Finding in my mind an apprehension that the Lord was angry with me, in a very pensive frame of mind, I went home; when my friends saw me, they wished to know what was the matter with me, I looked so unhappy they said, and asked me, "if any of my companions had been beating me?" I replied, "no;" they said, "you are not well then," to which I faintly made this reply, "not very well." I could eat no supper, but sat, till bed time, in a kind of muse; when I went to bed, I was afraid to shut my eyes, for fear I should go to sleep and awake in hell; at length I fell asleep, and in the morning found the impression gone: nor do I recollect that it kept me one sabbath from that practice, which I continued in until the age of twelve, (in the following circumstance):—One sabbath day, joining my companions in play in a meadow, and being highly entertained therewith, I was suddenly interrupted by a powerful fear in my mind, that, in running, I should break
my

my legs, which made me perform that part of the play so sadly, being obliged to stop every minute or two to feel of my legs, that my playmates disbanded me from them at that time; and, whether my reader may believe it or not, so it was, that every step I took, in my way home, I expected to hear one or both of my legs snap; and glad was I, when I arrived safe at home.

At another time, being at play on the Lord's day, all on a sudden, I thought a fire-ball was coming down from the clouds upon me, and I stood with my shoulders drawn up and my back bent, when one of my companions giving me a push, said, "what do you stand so for?" all my reply was, "O dear!" I then looked up, to see if I could see God, who I expected was looking all the while upon me with great anger; when I found he was not to be seen, I took to my heels, and ran home as fast as possible, not daring to look up, for fear I should see the frowning face of God; and when I entered my father's house, durst not venture out any more that evening, but was glad to think I had escaped so well.

At another time, on a Lord's day I was playing, in the church-yard, at a game

called prisonbase ; I had not played long, before I thought the earth moved under my feet, and my mind was struck with a fear, that I should quickly see the dead, in that yard, arise as witnesses against me ; that Scripture coming to my mind, *Neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead,* Luke xvi. 31. Knowing nothing of Scripture at that time, more than having read it at school, and not being able to form any idea of its meaning, durst not stay any longer in that place, for fear of seeing the dead come forth, which I thought would be to my ruin. With this nack of sabbath-breaking, I pursued a daily course of sin and mischief, with such rapidity, that it became a saying in common, if any mischief was done—young *Hews* was at the head of it, no doubt ;—amongst other things. An uncle of mine, then living in the place, whom you will hear more of hereafter, unknown by me at that time as a good man, said, “he feared I should come to the gallows :” which saying always worked on my mind, and never left me until I was brought to know the Lord’s Christ.

Some time after these things, I dreamed a dream, which I relate to you as a dream.

I thought

I thought I was standing on the green in the village where I lived, and looking towards the north, I thought I saw the heavens open and large pillars of fire making their way towards the place where I stood; soon, I thought, the whole heavens were in flames, and I, surrounded with nothing but fire; looking downwards, hell opened, devils coming to take hold of me, and I crying out exceeding loud, as I thought, "Lord have mercy upon me!" I heard a voice, and looking upwards, saw a most glorious person, who said, "repent;" I said, "it is too late:" but soon, as I thought, found my soul melting in that manner, as to fall to the ground, and was taken up by the glorious person I saw, who said, "it is not too late," and immediately the pillars of fire removed, and I awoke, glad to find I was not in hell. This remained on my mind a long time, and prevented my play on the Lord's day, and, in a great measure, on other days. The method I now took, for the most part, was to stand and look on, but not play myself; and being thus engaged one Lord's day, one of my playmates swore, when I, who stood by, hearing it, was instantly tempted to swear myself; this being a thing I was not accustomed to,

filled my mind with some dread, and I, thinking of my dream, went away, and durst not go any more.

I now thought I would amuse myself with some innocent diversion alone, but was soon interrupted even in this, by this sound almost always in my ears, *Prepare to meet thy God*. At length I spent my time chiefly in walking in the church-yard, endeavouring to employ my mind with thoughts of death, judgment, and eternity; while musing, one day, on these words, on a grave rail, *Death little warning to me gave, and quickly sent me to my grave*; I felt my mind employed with serious thoughts of my own departure, and a dread, that if God should soon take me away, that I should go to hell; being conscious that I had done nothing, as I thought, for heaven. I then began to think of preparing for the kingdom, and entered on such a course as I thought (in my state of ignorance), was most likely to fit me for heaven. I, orderly and thoughtfully, attended the church, took my seat just before the parson, and was so devout as not to turn my head enough to know who sat next to me, through any part of the worship. I very often looked on the minister, and felt a rising desire that I might

might be made one ; thinking that they, no doubt, were right with God, and no person more revered the gown and surplice, (those rags of popery) than I at that time. With this, I likewise had my portion of the true spirit of churchmen, namely, wishing that all who did not go to church were to be put to death, and was exceeding zealous in worshipping I knew not what, being filled with the spirit of a stinking pharisee, and his blind zeal. I made it a rule with me, to retire by myself and read the prayer book seven times a day ; and while I continued in this, I was bolstered up with such a false hope, and delusive peace, that I had not the most distant doubt of going to heaven, and often used to think, there never was any one that had greater reason to think of going to heaven than I, at this time, had ; although I knew nothing of Jesus, his blood, or righteousness, nor yet of a divine principle of renewing grace.

While I continued constant in this course, I felt my mind easy, and, as I thought, happy ; but when I became remiss, and omitted but one of the times in a day, I found my happiness gone, and my hope shook, for sometimes a week or more together ; I then set upon making
amends,

amends, as I thought, to Almighty God for this, by reading much longer each time. Thus, for a time, I went on, frequently promising the Lord that I would, each day, be better than before, and breaking my vows almost as fast as I made them; I at length found, that I had enough to do, day by day, to read prayers, and seek to maintain a hope of heaven: which at length became more lasting, from a consideration, that wherein I was wanting, God would look over; because he, as I thought, must know I did the best I could.

I remember, at this time, reading a book called *Russell's Seven Sermons*, in which he, in one part of it, was shewing that it was not enough to confess sin to God in general, but that every sin must be confessed in particular, and advised to that day by day, as we could be said to recollect them. This seemed to me quite a new piece of business: as I had made such an amendment, and done so much good, I could see no need of confession in any thing, but when I did not make up my number of prayers, and that I thought was right to own to God, and promise him to do better another time; but however I thought it might be right, though I had not known of it, and thinking it was a
 thing

thing very easy, and what I could soon do, I set about it, and related to the Lord all I could remember, of what I thought had been wrong in my actions, without any feeling, or any sorrow, or even asking pardon; the whole being set right, as I thought, by the good I was daily doing. I, after a time, became so sure of heaven, in my mind, that whenever I heard a bell toll, I wished it was for me: and thus I continued till I came into the twelfth year of my age.

Reader! these lines to you I've shewn,
What I at twelve years old have done,
From legal conscience wrought:
If you have done the same as me,
We are but Pharisees you see,
To God no honours brought.

May Jesus shew you something more,
I've often wish'd I'd known before
Unto that age I came:
Namely, the Saviour's saving grace,
Jehovah's smiles in Jesu's face,
The Saviour's charming name.

Had this been known, no hopeful puff,
Had ere arose from such vain stuff,
As prompt'd my soul with pride;
But since my God has deign'd to show,
I now go on to let you know,
Why I the same deride.

CHAP. II.

WHEN one day I was reading the life of Mr. *John Bunyan*, in that part where he gives an account of hearing two women conversing about the new birth, and the manner in which his mind was struck with surprise at it, it instantly struck my mind with such amazement, that I could read no farther, but laying the book down, I ran out into the orchard, crying out all the way I went, what is it? what is it? what is it? and at the upper part of the orchard, farthest from the house, I stopped and mused on the feelings I now felt myself the subject of; being such as I had never had before, I concluded the Almighty was going to take away my senses, and, like a dart, it struck my mind in a moment, for dissembling so much before him. The goodness of my heart I then pleaded, but now it was I found a useless plea: the horrors of my mind forced me back again to the book, to see if I had certainly read such a thing

thing, and finding it really was so, I thought of going to my mother to know if I could be born of her again ; as I thought I should not like to have any other mother besides her : but concluding to stay until the morrow, I went to rest that night with my mind unsettled, as the troubled sea, about being born again ; and felt my mind sorry that it must be so, or no heaven, as I thought I should be so long before I became a man.

When my reader sees this, should he or she think, sure no one could be so ignorant as this, I wish such person or persons, for their satisfaction, to read the third chapter of the gospel by St. John, and particularly the fourth verse ; where Nicodemus, a learned rabbi, a ruler of the Jews, an expounder of the law, as wise in Scripture as any carnal church parson in the world, and as deeply experienced as any of their hearers ; seems to have known no better about a new birth, than such a fool as I, at this time, was. He says, *How can a man be born when he is old, can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born ?*

When I arose in the morning, I thought I would read some more of the book, which I did ; and finding the conversation

tion of these women to have had as great effect on the mind of *Bunyan*, as the relation of it, from reading, had on my mind, I thought I would go on, in order to find what he did ; and reading on, I came to a part where it is said, “ he found sweet delight in reading the epistles of Paul, particularly his epistle to the Romans ;” I then thought I would read that, which I did—it being the first time I had known a desire to read the blessed word of God for myself ; but found nothing in it sweet to me, neither did I understand any thing about it. But being much perplexed in my mind about this, and thinking there was nothing there but for such as *Bunyan*, not for me, I thought, to prove this, I would read it again, which I did ; but with no more satisfaction than before. Thinking it was all vain, I was going to lay the book quite aside, when I, opening it, cast my eyes on the fifth chapter, and reading a few verses, I began to wonder how it was I should have missed that chapter when I read before, but, being able to recollect some things, I found I had not missed it : but, Oh ! the manner in which it appeared to me in that instant, I can never fully tell ! but this I know, that even the Bible itself is a sealed book, until revealed to the
mind

mind by the spirit of the Lord ; and that its truths ; I have since been made to know, viewed by the understanding of any man, however wise and knowing, differs as much from a spiritual discovery in the light of the Holy Ghost, as darkness differs from light, or midnight from noon day.

The next part of God's word that was opened to my mind, was the seventh chapter, which, like the other, opened to my mind in an unknown light, which I had never been acquainted with before, but with more lasting abidance than the former. Here I had the first discovery of human depravity, and the corrupted state of my nature, principle, and heart : and the eighth verse was, in some measure, experimentally known by me ; for sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence ; and now felt my soul the import, in some degree, of the eleventh verse. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and, by it, slew me. My former hopes were now shaken off—of going to heaven by my works, and yet I knew no other way : every thing that now opened to my mind, increased my fear. The law of my God appeared, revealing my Maker's wrath, and bringing a feeling sense of re-

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vealed

vealed wrath into my conscience. I was now come to the mount which burned with fire, and unto the blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the voice of words, that made me say, *Let not God speak any more, lest I die* : and, like the Israelites, could not endure that which was commanded. The spirituality of God's law offended me ; the curses of it terrified me ; and my own corruption filled my soul with dismay. I asked for mercy, but was denied it ; I thought of repentance, but here could find no place for it ; I sought for instruction, but could get none. But this you find the apostle had, in Romans, vii. 14. *For we know that the law is spiritual : but I am carnal, sold under sin.* I looked for shelter ; but, behold, a burning mountain, streaming forth fiercer wrath every moment, and unceasingly uttering this intolerable voice, *Cursed is every one, that continueth not, in all things, which are written in the book of the law, to do them.*

I am astonished at some who talk of the law bringing them to God, and quoting the apostles words for the same, Gal. iii. 24. *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ* : where the apostle, no doubt, was preaching of the ceremonial law, which, in its different sacrifices, had a direct tendency

tendency to lead the mind unto the Son of God : but the moral law can shew nothing to the enlightened soul but an angry God, a broken covenant, and a remediless state of misery, wretchedness, and woe. It will curse for the smallest failure ; can afford no aid in the greatest need, nor assist, in any respect, in the performing of it ; but only calls for continual and universal obedience in the spiritual exercises of those faculties of the soul, which, in every one of the fallen race, are wholly corrupted : and when the Holy Ghost gives eyes to see this, it will make a person say, like Moses, which I very sensibly felt, *I exceedingly fear and quake*, Heb. xii. 21. The law appeared in such a light to me, that I was obliged to own the truth of the twelfth verse in the seventh chapter of Romans, *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good* ; though, at the same time, I could not feel a love either to that or God, but felt the principle of Adam, my fallen head, powerfully to work ; so that if I could have found such a thicket of trees, as would have answered such a purpose, how gladly should I have hid myself from Almighty God. This was night and day uppermost in my mind, *Where shall I flee from his presence ?*

The Almighty discovered much of my state of bondage unto me, before he gave me to know the sweets of liberty. I found that this mount was Mount Sinai, and that it gendereth to bondage, which is Agar; Gal. iv. 24. (while before it I stood, as bound in fetters of iron, and could not come forth), *For this Agar is Mount Sinai, in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children.*

The horrors of my mind, the number of my sins, and the law of my God, with revered wrath in my conscience, now prevented me being the subject of any hopes of heaven, and, for some time, kept me from attempting to meddle with religion; all I could do, for many days together, was to cry, *What must I do to be saved?* If I walked out, I was terrified with the thought, that I should hear God curse me from the skies, and that the earth would open and let me in. Every thing in the word of God, seemed to augment the distress that was brought to my mind, namely, these parts: *The heart is deceitful, and desperately wicked, above all things; who can know it?* Jer. xvii. 9. Likewise that scripture, Gen. vi. 5. *God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that*

that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, was only evil continually; and the 5th verse of the 50th Psalm, Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. With that in Job, xiv.

4. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Here my former performances failed in my estimation of them; and the things I once thought good, yea, even my prayers, now stunk in my nostrils: nor did I think that a heart, like mine, could ever produce any thing better, than such a stinking, pharisaical hypocrisy; which I was now made to believe, a holy God must detest.

In this state, I could not be at ease, in not attempting to serve the Lord at all; but durst not go about any thing I judged right, on account of the corrupted state of my soul. It was brought to my mind to attempt to pray without a book; but this was a way of praying that I knew nothing of, nor should I have known as any body else did, had it not been that I had, at a few different times, heard, what we called, meeting-parsons; who, I observed, prayed without any book, and with their eyes shut. As to the church minister, I never knew him to pray extempore in all the times I heard him; nor any one of

them which I ever heard. My friends knew nothing about such a thing, nor I, any more than they : but, at this time, I could not keep the thoughts of it from my mind, though it often made me blush, and feel ashamed at the thought of attempting it. Another plea, in my mind, was, that I could not go on, and therefore it was in vain to begin ; but it still would have some considerable weight on my mind, so that I was obliged to propose, each night I went to bed, that, if I was spared, I would try another night ; and so for a while I struggled on : until rising one morning in a hurry, out of a doze, I felt my mind much at work about this shifting business, respecting prayer ; about noon, the God of all grace brought it to a point with me, and forced me to retire for that purpose—but with such feelings, as I can never fully describe. Here I was led by the Lord, like unto a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke ; and had it been in my power, I would have resisted to effect the Holy One of Israel. I speak it to the glory of the adorable Jesus, and his matchless grace, that if he had not made me pray, I never should, nor never would. I would have been damned, but he would not let me ; I strove to perish, but he was resolved to save ; as my reader will see
more

more of hereafter: had not his will prevented mine, hell had been my portion long ago. After many desperate struggles of mind, I made my way at length into a garret, in my father's house: when I entered the room, I carefully shut the door, and examined every part, as if I thought some one might be concealed there; I then began to muse on what I was there for: thinking of kneeling down, the colour rose up in my face to that degree, that my face burned like one in a violent fever. I went out of the room, and about two or three steps down the stairs, but was obliged to return back again. When I had shut too the door again, this plea came into my mind, "I have nothing to say:" with that I went out again, but was obliged to return as before. When I entered the room a third time, I burst out into tears, that I had not a word I could think of to say; and was just thinking, it was very hard the Lord should call upon me to do that I was so unprepared for, when, like lightening through the air, that scripture made its way to my mind, *God be merciful to me, a sinner!* and powerfully I felt it was the very prayer that my soul needeth to offer to God. With that I attempted to kneel down; when my knees were about half bent,

bent, I thought somebody had hold of the lappet of my coat, and turning round, all of a tremble, expected to see somebody there ; when I found there was no person there, I was much surprised : but, turning again to attend to what I was there for, I was interrupted with a thought, that it was the devil. This thought filled me with such a dread, that I was afraid to stay in the room, and afraid to go out, and afraid to turn my head, so that I was in that uncomfortable posture : my hands on the bedstead, my knees half bent, and my neck bent downwards, until the sweat ran down my face. I had before read prayers seven times a day, but was never interrupted in that legal worship, nor do I think any one is ; nor was I ever terrified with thoughts of the devil, until this time ; being the first time that Almighty God had bent my knees half way, for the purpose of praying for mercy. In my confusion I lost the words, but my good God sent them to me again, and, with such power, as bent my stubborn knees quite down to the floor, and made my reluctant soul cry out before him, *God be merciful to me, a sinner !*

Thus was poor, wicked, hell-deserving *Francis Hews*, brought on his knees before
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the Lord, by the sovereign power alone of Jesus's free and reigning grace ! I charge you, ye angels on high, that saw the circumstance, and do rejoice in the conversion of a poor sinner's soul to God, that if you ever tell it among the blessed above, that ye carefully spread it through the regions on high, to the glory of my ever-worthy, and dear Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, whose gracious work alone it was : and, while I attempt to spread it on earth, may the ever-blessed Spirit make an abundant use of it, unto the good of many souls ; and may my God have all the glory, for ever and ever.

Should any one think, that so much could not be felt in putting up one prayer to God, neither is it necessary thereunto, I wish them to read the scripture account of the conversion of Paul, in the ninth chapter of the Acts ; who, after he had been struck to the earth, by the powerful grace of God, (not before) we read of his praying ; and God himself speaks of it, with a note of admiration, when he calls to Annanias to go to him, in the last clause of the eleventh verse, he saith, *for behold, he prayeth* ; and none but God could tell it, for he alone saw it, and heard it. And a striking proof it is, that God leads to prayer, as the sole
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author of spiritual breathings in the hearts of his people ; and also of the gracious notice he takes of the first outgoings of their hearts unto him ; and all this agreeable to his ancient promise to the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, in Zech. xii. 10. *And I will pour upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication.*" Nor can any be Christians without it ; this way of prayer, being God's fixed and unalterable way of leading all them that are his : Jer. xxxi. 9. *They shall come with weeping, and with supplication will I lead them, saith the Lord.*

Having once bowed my knees before Almighty God, in praying for mercy, I felt my mind much employed about going on with it ; having a conviction, in my soul, that I had better never prayed, than to depart from it when I had. On the next day, I attempted to go to prayer again, and without that dread I felt before, arising from this circumstance, that I had got so much in my mind to say to God. Not knowing that it might soon be gone from my mind, I ventured boldly unto the throne of God ; and when I was kneeled down, ready to address the Divine Being, I found all was gone, and I could recollect nothing ;

nothing ; neither could I speak. The perplexity of my mind was such, that I thought my jaws were locked, and I put my hand to my mouth to try if I could get my mouth open. While thus before God, that scripture came to my mind, *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.* I said, " I cannot speak, neither know what to say : " but God thus taught me, *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing : for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.* Isaiah, xxxv. 5, 6.

Thus God emptied me of that which was mine, to fill me with that which was his ; and taught me my dependance on him, in prayer, for matter and manner too, agreeable unto his mind.

From this I felt more of gracious influence needful in my approaches unto God, than I had ever felt : and was directed to pray by that sweet scripture, *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.* Luke xi. 13. I now set upon praying for the Divine Spirit, from the promise of God ; and was encouraged

couraged by the 7th chapter of Matthew, and 7th verse, *Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.* Drawing nigh unto God, for some little time, with these promises, I began to find my soul interrupted by many strange thoughts. Having read the seventh chapter of Daniel one day, and going to prayer afterwards, the ninth verse was made a strange use of in my mind, *I beheld, till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool.* When I came before God, I thought of him as an old grey-headed man, dressed all in white ; and thought I saw him in an old two-elbowed chair, and felt myself powerfully inclined to laugh at him. This filled me with distress for some time, and with much dread, when I attempted to pray.

At another time, I seemed to be filled with nothing but blasphemy ; and was so tempted to burst out a swearing at the Almighty, that I thought I could not have left the room, until I had cursed God, as I thought, to his face : this brought me under fearful apprehensions of the displeasure of God for many days.

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At another time, I was tempted to pray unto the devil, and fall down and worship him; but at this my soul felt exceedingly angry, and that scripture helped me, in Luke iv. 8. *Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* But it is not to be wondered at that I was thus tried, seeing Satan could thus tempt the Son of God himself.

At another time, praying for the Holy Ghost, I thought I felt a rising dislike to the Holy Spirit; and soon my mind was so influenced to curse the Spirit, that I thought I could not have avoided it; and at length was so, that I could scarcely tell whether I had or not: while I was saying, "have I? have I?" this was forcibly brought into my mind, "If you have not, do it now, that you may be sure you have." "Oh!" said I, "I do not want; I wo'nt, I wo'nt:" and something seemed to say, "You may as well, for you will be sure to be damned, whether you do or not."

At another time, I was tempted to call God a fool, and to curse the Bible, and to burst out a laughing at religion: these things brought me to a very great stand, with respect to attempting to go to prayer; and sometimes I thought I would, and, at
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others, I thought it would be better not. Being at such a stand in my mind, I knew not what to do ; at length was directed by that scripture in Matt. vi. 6. *Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father.* I attempted to follow this direction, but with much difficulty, being afraid to shut the door oftentimes, for fear Satan should come ; nor dare I call God father, very often ; nor could I find words to pray much at a time, and oftentimes none ; but was obliged to weep and sigh, and that was all.

At this time I was taken very ill, and being confined within doors for some weeks, took much to reading the word of God ; now and then, some other book, but chiefly the Bible, this being the most suitable to me ; but had no one to converse with : nor had I spoke unto any enlightened person about religion in my life, nor any one to me ; nor did I know any thing of any such people, but all this while had walked alone ; but not without many a wish, that I had some one to speak to. As to religious tenets, I knew nothing about ; nor any creed, but that I felt ; and that was borrowed from none, but an original with me, taught me by the Lord alone.

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In all my exercises, thus far, I knew nothing of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, bringing a sense of free pardon, through his blood, and the peace of God, into the soul; but was running from Sinai, galled with the intolerable yoke of bondage, and influenced to pray for mercy. That question one day striking my mind, *How shall man be just with God?* from reading the chapter, and I, not knowing the meaning of it, was led to pray, that God would, some way or other, make it known unto me; which, in the following manner he did.

Hail Immanuel! God with us,
 Omega last, and Alpha first;
 Now beaming forth in mercy's rays,
 Sinners live to speak thy praise.

In thee, thy Father, we adore,
 Sov'reign Lord of love and power;
 Quickening, by the Holy Ghost,
 We sinners; who by sin are lost.

How keen the pangs thy teachings give,
 But life from death thy saints derive;
 The life that Moses ne'er could show,
 Through Jesu's opening wounds doth flow.

CHAP. III.

A FEW days after, being a very warm day, a person came for my aunt, to go and hive their bees for them; I thought I would go and see her do it; accordingly, I took my stick, for I was so weak I could not walk without it, and made my way to the place, which was my uncle's orchard, I hinted of, at the beginning of this book. I had not stood but a very little while, before a bee came (God's servant I believe), to me, buzzing about my head, which forced me out of the orchard, into my uncle's yard, and followed me down the yard, until I came to the back door; there, I thought, it would have stung me; and, the door being open, I made my way into his house. When I had got in, I found my aged uncle groaning upon a couch, and thus addressed him: "How do you do, uncle?" He, looking up, said, "Ah! *Francis*, and how do you do?" I said, "I was

was very poorly indeed." "And so am I," said he, "but only in my body: for though I am groaning on this couch, I enjoy more of the favour of my God, than I did, oftentimes, when I was well." This manner of talk was what I had never heard from any one before; but seemed to have considerable place in my mind at this time. He said, "Come, and sit down in this chair by me;" accordingly I did: and was no sooner sat down, but he said, "*Francis*, how do you find your mind towards God." At which I trembled, like a leaf shaken by the wind, and burst into tears: at the sight of which, the good old man burst into tears also; and began to cry out, "Oh! my God, hast thou answered my prayer?" at which I was much surprised; but he soon informed me, that it had been powerfully impressed on his mind, that God would, some time, make me acquainted with his grace; for which, he said, he had been more set at liberty in praying for, than any one thing he ever knew. "And likewise," said he, "God has revealed it unto me, I believe, that you will be a minister of his gospel; and I have prayed, that you might be under the workings of his grace, before I leave the world, to my satisfaction: and

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having no hope of living long, I trust that God is now about to shew it to me." He then asked me, "What I had felt?" I felt myself very unwilling to tell, but, from his entreaty, I did; and when I had done, he said, "I must give my God the glory:" and, rising up on his knees, on his couch, entered on such prayer and praise to the Lord, as I had never before heard. When he had done, he asked, "If I could stop a little, and read to him? as he had no one to do that, and could not see himself." I told him, "I would try to get as far as his house in the afternoon, if I could, and should be glad to read some good book unto him then, as far as my strength would allow;" at which he seemed rejoiced.

When I got up out of my chair, to go home, I saw a book on his table, and taking it up, read the title; which was *The Rose of Sharon, and the Lilly of the Vallies*. I then set out home, with my mind as full as it could hold; first, thinking how dreadful it was, that I should have such an uncle living, and pay no more attention unto him than I had done. And also, if it had not been for the buzzing of the bee, I should not have went into his house, when I was so near unto it. I mused with wonder

wonder, when he said that he had prayed for me : and could not help blessing God, as I passed along, that any one should be permitted to offer prayer unto him, for such a wretch as I. As to his saying, that God had revealed unto him, that I should preach the gospel, or be a minister of the gospel, I was entirely lost in it : for I did not know what the gospel was, neither did I see how it was possible, that such a poor, ignorant creature as I, should ever be a minister of it. I felt myself happy, that I should now have a companion, I hoped, to converse with ; but, above all, the title of the book was the thing with me, *The Rose of Sharon, and the Lilly of the Vallies*, seemed sweet unto me, although I did not then understand it. About this I went musing home, and thought, in my mind, that that book would, with the blessing of God, open something sweet unto my mind.

In the afternoon, after being rested, I went into my uncle's house again, and read the book : and here I enjoyed a Bethel indeed. I found the Rose of Sharon was the Lord Jesus Christ ; and so sweetly was he discoursed of in this pamphlet, in his names, characters, and offices, and relations unto his people, that I felt my heart enraptured whilst I read. After I
had

had done reading, my uncle entered upon conversation with me, about faith in Jesus Christ: I listened attentively, my very soul being in the subject; and these were the things I needed to know, to the peace of my soul—I was then quite certain.

When I left my uncle, I had the happiness of his asking me to come again as soon as I could, and said, “Your company is quite acceptable:” with this I was much struck, and much comforted.

In my return home, my mind was wholly taken up with thoughts of Jesus Christ, and faith in him, as crucified for sinners. When I got home, and had a little rested myself, I went up stairs into a closet, and found my soul sweetly drawn out in prayer, that God would, of all things, make known the Lord Jesus, as crucified, unto me; nor did I ever feel such heart-melting before the Lord before, as I felt now; nor such sweet drawings of love, into the comforts of scripture, as now. Many passages opening into my mind, endearing unto me the blessed Son of God; that in John, xiv. 6. *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* And also that portion in Heb. x. 19, 20. *Having therefore, brethren, bold-*
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ness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus ; by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil ; that is to say, his flesh. From these scriptures, I was blessed with a discovery of God's appointed way unto himself ; and was released from much fear in drawing near unto God, of a slavish kind, which I before had felt.

Now viewing God, in the Son of his love, and beholding his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, my soul felt anxious desires to draw pardon and peace from the Saviour, and for this I often prayed ; and for many times, when I went to see my uncle, met with something encouraging to my soul ; his whole talk being about Jesus unto me. At one time, he discoursed about his mercy, in a most beautiful manner ; at another time, about his justifying righteousness : and here it was my soul was shewn, how man could be just with God.

These subjects I made matter of prayer, that God would shew them unto me, for my good, from his own word, in praying for pardon, through his Son. I found Satan set upon me, in a most furious manner, with these suggestions :—that I was not one of God's chosen people, and therefore

fore there was no mercy for me ; and that my sins were too great ever to be forgiven. Also, that I had sinned away the day of grace, and that the Son of God would have nothing to do with me. But this the Lord was pleased to confute, by his own word, from these parts of it being applied powerfully to my mind, Isaiah, xliii. 25. *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.* And Heb. viii. 12. *For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness ; and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.* With that sweet promise, in the 6th chap. of John's gospel, and 37th verse ; *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

These passages came to me with power and glory, beyond what I can describe ; and afforded me sweet peace of mind. The justification of the soul appeared plain, from some scriptures given to me by God ; as, Isaiah, lix. 6. *And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.* Also, the 1st of Peter, ii. 24. *Who, his ownself, bare our sins in his own body on the tree.* And the 3d chap. and 18th verse of the same epistle, *For Christ, also, hath once suffered for sin ; the just for the unjust ; that he might bring us to God.* And the 2d of Cor. 5th chap. and

and last verse, *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* From these scriptures, I saw the way of justification, but did not, at this time, enjoy it; but shall, hereafter, let you know the time when I did.

My soul now found that going to God, in prayer, was its highest privilege, through the Son of his love; and the conversation of my uncle was more and more profitable unto me. My friends finding I was much taken to my uncle, and that when I was not with him, was for the most part up stairs reading my Bible; they began to talk to me, about his being a Meetinger; this I knew nothing about, neither did I care about it; I did not go to see him for that reason; but because I thought he was a man of God, and I found, blessed of God unto my soul. At length they told me, I should not go to see him; if I did, I should be turned out of doors; this very much troubled my mind, and I went and told my uncle of it: he bid me not fear, God would provide, if they did; if they turned me out, he would take me in. At this time, I was getting better in my body, and more able to read and write, which were the things I employed myself

myself with ; they threatened to burn my pens and hide my Bible, and told me, if they did not, I should soon go mad with studying, as many of that sort did.

Soon after this, my uncle was so much recovered, for a little time, as to be able to go about with sticks : he came and talked to them ; but this added fuel to fire. Coming one day to our house, there was one Mrs. *Chilcot* there, a gentlewoman of an independant fortune, who had two sisters that lived with her ; one of them had passed some conversation with my uncle, I understood afterwards ; and when he came in, supposing it to be her, thus begun : “ Well, how doth the work of God go on in your soul now ? ” to which, she thus replied, “ Oh ! you curst old rogue, you thought it had been my sister, did you ? but you are mistaken ; I’ll have none of your cant to me ; and as to my soul, you have nothing to do with ; and I’ll make you remember asking such questions of me : ” to which, the old man replied, “ I believe you will.”

A few days after this, she came again, and I sat reading my Bible : as soon as she entered the house, she said, “ O Lord ! I have caught the young devil now.” This gentlewoman had formerly shewn a regard

regard for me, and had given me a suit of clothes because I went to church ; and thought the reason of my being absent, for some time past, was my illness : but now she suspected something more ; and thus begun with me, “ Well, *Francis*, has old *Bernard Bedford* made a Whitfieldite of you ? ” I said, “ I did not know what light that was, nor any, but the light of God’s word ; and I thought, all besides that appeared to me to be darkness. ” She said, “ I find you have got a naek at the cant, and you’ll soon be led away ; you are got better, and I shall expect you to come to church on Sabbath day : ” I said, “ Very likely I should : ” at this, she seemed pleased, and told me, “ If I kept to the church, she would be a great friend to me. ” On the Lord’s day I went, for I had this in my mind, to try if I was capable of discerning any difference ; and when I was there, the whole worship appeared nothing but confusion, and, in my view, little better than madness : as to the parson, I saw his condition to be that of black darkness ; and his character that in the 56th chapter of *Isaiah*, 10th and 11th verses. *His watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber :*

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slumber : Yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand, they all look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter. I sat listening to hear something of Jesus Christ, but not a word could this letter-learned fool say about him. I now thought of my folly, in wishing to be one of them; and considered the state of such a man to be as dreadful as any on this side hell : and from such reading-ignorance, and blind worship, my heart said, “ Good Lord deliver me ! ”

On the Monday, this gentlewoman came unto my mother again, and found me there ; and, in a very good humour said, “ So, *Francis*, you was at church yesterday.” “ Yes,” said I, “ I was ; but it will be a great while before I shall be there again.” With this, her countenance changed, and raving out, she said, “ What do you mean by that ? ” “ I mean,” said I, “ that, in my opinion, the parson, and the people, are all blind, as to the way of salvation : and you know, Madam, the scriptures, *that if the blind lead the blind, they will both fall into the ditch together ;* and I think I am best away : for should that be the case amongst them, I should not like to fall with them.” In great anger
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she said, "What did you go yesterday for?" I said, "To be honest; I went to see if God would shew me the unscripturalness of that worship, and the ignorance of the teacher; and he did." "Well," said she, "if it be so, I shall hate you; and you may sure I shall never do another act of kindness for you as long as I live." "Well, Madam," said I, "I thank you for every favour past; but am sorry you should so violently fly in the face of the law and the prophets, as you now purpose doing." Here she stopped me, and told me, "If I spoke another word, she would force me out of the house." I then got up and went out; knowing I was not so much recovered from my illness, as to be able to bear to be pushed about much: and, when I was gone, I heard her, in a desperate rage, assuring my mother, how she would set herself against her, if she did not keep me from *Bernard Bedford's*, and every one of the curst crew of meetings; and if she did, how much she would notice her: and thus agreed—"If we stick close to him, he may be stopped, I think," said she, "he is not gone too far yet;" at which, I could not help, for the life of me, bursting out into a laughter.

When she was gone, I was turned over by my mother, grandmother, and aunt, enough to drive a man mad, without divine assistance. The old lady, however, to keep them steadfast, sent them each a new gown; and from this, I was severely threatened, of what should be done, if I offended that good woman. I was sure, in my mind, that it would not be long before she would take offence; and this led me to make it a matter of prayer, that God would give me strength to stand against them all, and not be afraid; and that he would prepare me to bear the worst they could do unto me: nor did he refuse to grant me my request.

The next day I went to see my uncle, and told him the situation I was in: he said, "Fear not; wait on the Lord, and he will strengthen thy heart:" and, in a very pressing manner, advised me to pray for persevering grace; "which," he said, "God has engaged to bestow, in that promise in Deuter. xxxv. 25. *And as thy days, so shall thy strength be.*" He then informed me, that on the Thursday evening, Mr. *Blane*, the baptist minister, at *Newmill*, was to preach at *Grover's*, a baker's, in that place (and his house was a very

very little way from my mother's) and wished me, by all means, to go. I felt as anxious to go, as he could that I should; but now I was brought to a very great stand how to get to the meeting without my mother's seeing me; for that she could do in her own house. I prayed, that the Lord would so order it, that my friends might, about the time of meeting, be back in the garden or orchard, so as not to see me go; and then, I thought, I could stay with more composure of mind. And so it was: just as they had begun singing, and I, waiting for an opportunity to go, that my mother seemed quite destitute of any suspicion, and went to walk in the orchard, my two aunts went into the garden to draw water, and my grandmother was engaged in talking with one *Thomas Cock*, a neighbour, that often came in. Thus my way was made quite clear, and away went I to the meeting.

When I entered the house, I went and took a seat quite on the further side of the house; so that if they came after me, I thought I would not be got out, but sat and trembled every time the door was opened, expecting it was my mother. When the minister read his text, I had something else to engage my mind: the

words were, in the 2d of Timothy, iv. 7, 8. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them, also, that love his appearing.* Here I was taught the nature of a spiritual war, and of many of the Christian's foes, within and without; and found sweet encouragement to go on. But that part of the discourse, *that love his appearing*, was blessed, indeed, to my soul: I felt my heart glow with love to Jesus; and possessed a sweet hope, that when my righteous judge should appear, I should be found amongst them that love his appearing.

When service was over, I could scarce tell how to leave the house without speaking unto the minister, I felt such love to him; but I durst not venture so far. When I went home, all was very well, they knew nothing of my being at meeting: but the next day, the old gentlewoman got wind of it, and came to my aunt's house, adjoining to my friend's house; there was my mother, and all of them together: the old lady raving and tearing about my being at meeting; in the heat of her passion, she almost

almost split a table, from one end to the other with her fist; and told my mother she would advise her to beat my brains out, or else they would all be ruined through me. “For her fool of a brother,” she said, “would have ruined them if he could: he built,” she said, “a chapel, and kept the minister as long as he lived, and settled 30l. a year on the minister of that place, after his death—a cursed rascal,” said she, “or else there would have been more for me.” “A good thing, I think, Madam,” said I, “that the Lord put it into his heart to do such a thing.” Here I was ordered off, while she advised my friends how to proceed; and most dreadful threatenings I had.

But in the next week, one Mr. *Walker*, an independent minister of the chapel at *Berkhamsted*, being convinced of baptism, was to be baptised at *Newmill*, in the mill-pond; and going out to take a walk, my friends knowing of no other design in my mind, took no notice. When I was got out, I found some people going to *Newmill*, and went with them: and now I was favoured with two things; one was, that I was taught or shewn the way, so that, afterwards, I could find it myself; and the other, that I should have another opportunity.

nity. But when I came there, I found it but little to me : the whole discourse being preached, by a very learned man, about baptism : he using such language, as I knew nothing about ; neither was my concern, at this time, about baptism, but about salvation. However, I took particular notice of the way ; and had it in my mind to steal away, on Lord's day, to that place, to hear. But when I got home, they were ready for me ; having been, by some means, informed where I had been, and dinned my ears, for some hours, with an intolerable noise ; and told me, I should be turned out of doors.

On the following week, Mr. *Blane* came to preach again, and I was determined to go, if God spared my life. When the evening came, my mother said, "That if I went into the house, she would come, and break all the windows, and tear me out by the hair of my head ;" and I was watched as carefully, as ever a cat watched a mouse. I, seeing the young men of the village playing at cricket, on the green, just before the house, went and stood by them, on that side next to the house where the preaching was. This play I had been exceeding fond of ; and, at length, they beat the ball quite up to the door of the house.

house where the preaching was ; I ran and took it up, and threw it unto them : my mother, seeing this, went in, to tell them within, I was got at play ; and, while she did that, I went to the meeting—my eyes being as quick as hers. Looking out again, and missing me, she made an enquiry where I was ? they said, “ Gone to the meeting.” With that, she was coming full drive, when one of the sisters of the old gentlewoman, coming into the gate, stopped to talk with her ; and the story lasted so long, that meeting was over before it was done ; and I got home, and the heat of her passion was so much over, that I had but little said to me at that time.

Thus I saw the hand of my God with me for good, and gave me such encouragement, that I thought I would not stay at home another Sabbath, out of fear, as I had done the Sabbath before ; and made it a matter of prayer, that God would appear for me on that day. When the Lord’s day was come, I had my orders to go to church, and was not allowed to go out of doors, until after dinner, when I was watched into the church-yard ; and, as soon as I found I was out of the sight of my friends, I made my way to *Newmill*,
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and got there just as they were entering on worship. Mr. *Blane* preached from this text, Luke xi. 13. *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him.* This, in a particular manner, drew my attention; being a passage that had been blessed of God unto my soul, as I have stated before: but now I saw new beauties, which before I knew not of. The Holy Ghost, as the third person in the Trinity, and coequal with the Father and the Son, was here shewn unto me; and his blessed office stated in such a light, that met with every desire of my soul at that time. The encouragement I met with, to pray for this blessed Spirit, was such, as quite engaged my soul for that time; so that when service was over, I set out home, praying for the Spirit all the way I went; not knowing any thing of a step I took all the way, nor any circumstance but this: when I was got about half way home, I found my soul so overpowered, that I could go no farther—no, not one step, until I had prayed unto God there. When I had done, I made for home, with my heart up to
 God.

God, every step I took, if ever it was in my life.

When I entered my friend's house, I could not stop one moment to hear what they would say unto me; but made my way up stairs, and fell on my knees, with my soul deeply engaged in prayer to God, for the Holy Spirit. When I had done, I came down stairs: my mother told me, she should be glad to see me a corpse, and follow me to the grave, rather than to see me as I then was; she insisted, it should be put a stop to, or else she would go away. My aunt then joined her, and my grandmother likewise, and very much wounded my mind, in despising and abusing that dear man the Lord had so much blessed unto me that day, in preaching. They said, he was nothing but an old broken baker, and called him by the name of old bishop burnt-crust: and said, he was a curst old rogue, to draw a young youth astray in such a manner; the whole crew were nothing but whores and rogues; and all they wanted was to get my money, if I was fool enough to give it them, when I could get any; and to set me against my friends and every body, but their sort. When I had heard all this, I attempted to give an answer, but was denied. I then
found

found my prayer, in some measure, answered, that I had put up unto God for his Spirit; for I was enabled to go up stairs, and pray for these poor creatures, and found more desire for their salvation, than I ever had before; and greater love to my poor despised preacher from all this: so that I spent most part of that night in prayer to God, and praise on his account. I found my mind afterwards exercised, with much fear, lest they should, by any means, keep me from hearing the word; for I had, at this time, many ties unto the house of God; the pastor was blessed in his preaching, unto my soul, and my heart felt the power of the word: the people appeared the most lovely of any on earth, in my view; so that when I have seen any of them go along the streets, I stood and looked after them, as long as I could see them, and then turned away and cried that I was not one of them; and could have given the world, to have been with those, I thought, were the people of God. I often thought I should soon die, if I was kept from the means of grace that they enjoyed; but that scripture was my support, in Joshua, i. 9. *Have not I commanded thee, be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed,*

mayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest. This scripture often made the tears pour down my face, and my heart leap for joy; and filled me with admiration, that God should so speak unto me, and in such a way, as to afford my soul satisfaction. It was from him my mind was now possessed of a full determination to go on another Lord's day. When the Sabbath came, every means were tried to prevent: the dinner was late, and I was not allowed to have a clean shirt, until after dinner, to put on; nor yet any clothes they thought I would like to go out in.

When the bells began to chime, I was ordered to prepare for church. When I was dressed, and come down stairs, they were ready to go; and I was to go with them; accordingly, I went with them, up to the church doors, where stood a company of men, as was a custom on the Lord's day with them, talking over all manner of wickedness, oftentimes, and always light, vain conversation at the best. I have known that place, often, on a Lord's day, more like Billingsgate than any other. Here I made a stop; my mother thinking I was going to stay with these men, as they usually stood talking while

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the parson came, went her way with my aunt into the church: I had enough of them in a few minutes; their conversation, when compared with what I heard in *Newmill* meeting-yard, appeared as opposite as that of angels and devils.

My mother being gone into the building, they called their church, and that scripture coming, with power, into my mind, in Genesis, xlix. 6. *O my soul, come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly; mine honour be not thou united.* I immediately went, without hesitation, and jumped over the pales of the church-yard, and made my way for *Newmill*: when I entered their place of worship, the minister had about half done prayer: the text he took that afternoon, was this, in Prov. xviii. 24. *And there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.* The very words made my soul leap for joy; and the subject was so blessed unto my soul, that I could have sat from that time to midnight, had I felt so all the while, as I did then; and thought the time short after all. When meeting was over, I went home, God only knows how, for I am sure I knew nothing about it, only that I got home very soon, and was as happy as I could wish to be, in the present state. When I entered the
house

house of my friends, I found I stood in need of this *friend that sticketh closer than a brother* ; for I was soon forced to fly out of doors, with the fire-tongs thrown after me, and dreadful threatenings, if I ever came in any more. I went into my aunt's house, adjoining my father's, and up stairs, and went to prayer ; when I was favoured with such enjoyment of the sweet Jesus's presence, that I seemed quite ready either for ease or pain, trouble or comfort, adversity or prosperity, life or death, as my best friend thought fit. I was now willing to leave all for Jesus ; and to have a home or none, so that I might but have him as my Lord and my God : and that sweet scripture was given me, to take down stairs with me in my heart, in Psalm xxvii. 10. *When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.*

Being allowed to enter the house after some time, amidst a vast noise and confusion, I sat down and said nothing, let them say what they might. At supper-time, they told me, " I might go to my crew for my supper ; " but this did not much affect me ; for I had bread to eat that they knew not of ; poor souls ! I wished they did.

Through the following week, I had almost a continual noise ; and Satan worked by

it, to the trying of my mind exceedingly, in this way, that I was the cause of all their wickedness, and that proved I must be wrong, let my joys be what they might; and I ought to give way to my mother, and try and keep peace. This seemed plausible enough; for I knew very well I was the cause of it, from going to hear the word of God; and this I felt no desire to depart from, whether there was peace or not: but felt desires, that God would, in some way or other, help my mind to some sweet satisfaction respecting of this thing, which he did, by that part of his word in Matt. x. 34. and the two following verses; *Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household.* This satisfied my mind, that religion had such crosses attending of it; and the words in the 38th verse lay with solemn weight on my mind; *And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.* I made it a matter of prayer, that the Lord would sanctify every cross, and give me strength

strength to bear, and particularly, that he would keep me from apostacy.

On the following Sabbath, after dinner, I went to walk in the orchard, where I was watched, every moment, by one or the other in the house; but observing them, for a few minutes off the watch, I jumped over the pales, and went a mile round, to get into the road to *Newmill*, to which place I ran every step of the way, which I, by going round, had made about four miles; this I performed in less than three quarters of an hour: for the Spirit of God, and enjoyment of Jesus, the sinner's friend, will make nimble feet, and a cheerful heart, I know by experience. When I came there, I heard a discourse from this text, in Prov. xxvii. 10. *Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not.* And here I met with much to sanction my proceedings, and to encourage me to follow hard after God.

I now thought of going boldly unto the house of God; and when the next Lord's day came, at noon I was coming down stairs, when my aunt stood at the bottom of the stairs, and I, having on my best clothes; she, with her face as red as blood, said, "So you are going to your crew, are you?" I said, "I am going to *Newmill*." My mother, hearing of this,

said, "But you sha'nt; if you do, you shall never come in here again." To which I made this reply, "I must leave that with God; but go I will, if the Lord enables me." My aunt said, "What! if the devil and a flaming sword stood in your way?" I said, "The devil did stand in my way; and if all the devils in hell were in the way, I hoped God would help me through them, so that I might get to his house; and as to flaming swords, I knew well they could do nothing, without the permission of God." With that, I pushed by, and made my way for the door, and when I was got out of the house, I ran, as fast as I could, out of the town, and made my way unto *Newmill*. When I came within sight of the place, I felt my soul much delighted with viewing the house of God. The words of David, in the 84th Psalm, 1, 2. became sweet unto me; *How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.*

I entered into the place of worship with my expectation raised very high; but when worship began, I found such a gloom and deadness seize upon my mind and soul,
that

that it was with great difficulty I kept my seat ; being tempted very much to take my hat, and go out of the place. When singing and prayer was over, I was in hopes I should hear something to comfort and encourage me ; but instead of that, I found myself tormented, all the time, with something, I thought, standing behind me, and whispering in my ears dreadful blasphemies against the Holy Ghost ; so that every time the minister made mention of the Holy Spirit, I felt as if I must burst out in swearing : it was so trying unto me, that I was forced to stop my ears with my fingers, lest I should hear any more about the Spirit of God. Then I was tempted to sit, and grin, and laugh at the people, and to think it foolishness amongst them : and it seemed as if something said, “ Never come any more ; ” and I thought I said, “ No, I will not. ” I thought the minister was very long ; and found my mind rise against him also : and thought how foolish he was, to stand gaping there so long.

When service was over, and I was got out of the meeting-house and from amongst the people, I began to think of the state of my mind, with inexpressible distress and concern, as my reader will
suppose

suppose. Being before favoured with very great comfort and divine support, at the house of God, for several times together, and going home with a heart full of joy, were circumstances so unlike to what I now felt, that I was quite lost in forming ideas of this strange and sudden change. As I walked on, I felt my heart tortured with pain and anguish, that I must go into the midst of trials, and found no inward support; but what was still worse, I felt misery in my soul every step I took, and intolerable anguish of heart, for wishing and thinking as I had done, in the house of God: but still I found the same things working powerfully in my mind, so that I could scarce avoid blaspheming as I went along. In my way home, I was tempted to sell myself to the devil; and forced to stop my fist into my mouth, to prevent calling for Satan to come, that I might bargain with him.

So I went trembling, sweating, and crying home, from the house of God. When I got home, my friends began, as was usual with them, but it had no influence on my mind; the misery of my soul being enough for my thoughts to dwell on at that time. I soon went to bed, but could not continue there long; for I thought if I shut my eyes, I
could

could never open them any more. I expected nothing but death; and thought I felt eternal damnation sealed on my heart. I got out of bed, and stood sometime near the window of the room, wondering what I could be the subject of. Sometimes I thought I was bewitched; then supposed I was out of my mind; and then, that God had left me, and given me over to a perishing state. Thus was I tossed from thing to thing in my mind, and tortured in my feelings, so that the sweat ran down me, like a person at hard labour. At length, amongst other things, I thought of prayer; but found no mind to engage therein, as I had before: but, after musing some time, I attempted it. But in this I was interrupted, with blasphemy rising thicker and faster in my mind against God; so that I was ready to bless with one breath, and curse with another.

Leaving this, I got into the bed again, as miserable, I thought, as a creature could well be, that was out of hell. I had not been long in bed, however, but I found something worse, which I had not thought of before. The devil was permitted to have access to my mind, with this temptation, that I had committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost; and
made

made a most awful use of that scripture, against me, in Mark iii. 29. *But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness.* The enemy said, I had done this; and charged me with the thoughts that I had at the house of the Lord, that made me stop my ears against the preaching of the Holy Ghost. With this I was tempted to think, that prayer would never be of any use unto my soul any more; nor the prayers of any other neither: and that scripture seemed to confirm it unto my mind, in the 1st epistle of John, v. 16. *There is a sin unto death; I do not say that ye shall pray for it.*

When I arose in the morning, my mind was in a most perplexed state indeed. I wished I had never heard, nor thought, nor known any thing of the Holy Ghost, and then, I thought, I could not have sinned against him. Sometimes I wondered what I had been led to pray for the Spirit for; and then these thoughts would turn again on my mind as evidences, I thought of my having committed that sin, or else I should not think such things as these. Sometimes I felt a sorrow rise, that I should have sinned against the Spirit; and wished there was such a thing as forgiveness for me, and that I might
but

but have the Spirit of God. Sometimes I felt a little hope, that it was not so ; as I did not design to sin against the Spirit, nor did I know when I did do it, with my mind in it. I knew I felt much rise in me of blasphemy ; but that was the grief of my heart, and the burthen of my soul, and distress of my mind. At other times, I seemed quite sure it was my woful case ; and was often tempted to encourage all the hardness of heart, that at any time I felt : and whenever I attempted to pray, I seemed to be set against God, and yet could not let prayer pass, although I thought it would be of no use ; nor did I seem to find any satisfaction in it, but often tried to shun it, but could not. When I heard of any person being more than a usual sinner, I thought I would outdo him if I could : and when I read of any having sinned, in any particular manner, in any book of experience, I seemed as if I must do the same. And if I heard any of the prophane swearing, I was forced to stop my ears, and haste out of the way, or else I felt as if I must do the same ; and was often tempted to say—well done.

In this wretched state, possessed of the most opposite and contradictory feelings, I spent near three months : deprived of any
comfort

comfort in Christian conversation, or in hearing preaching, for fear the Spirit of God should be talked about ; and when it was, I was obliged to stop my mouth, for fear of blasphemy ; and often forced to go out of the place, like a distracted creature ; and have, many times, sat and sweat, with my hair wet on my head, and my shirt wet on my back, at my own thoughts. Much of my time was spent in trying to find out what the unpardonable sin was ; but here all failed with me. At length I became so desperate, that one day I went upstairs, and fell before God, and asked him to send me to hell, that I might know the worst : and I seemed, in my feelings, as if I could not be worse off ; but, blessed be his holy name for ever ! he would not do this, though I deserved it a thousand times over.

At length I went one Lord's day to hear an independent minister, who, in the course of his sermon, was observing that many of God's own children were much distressed about having sinned against the Holy Ghost, and should never be forgiven. But one thing, he said, would prove they had not ; and that was, their concern about it. He believed, he said, that a person that had done that, could have no more feeling than the seats we sat on. This I kept in
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my mind all the way home, and felt some glimmering of hope, and some desire to pray, which I attempted when I got home ; and blessed be God ! I found some liberty in it.

The following week, I felt very anxious to have a sense of pardon from God, for all the wicked thoughts of my heart against him.

One evening, things being so in the house, that I could scarce tell my own thoughts, for the noise they were making about the meetings, having almost made me mad, as they supposed. I went out into a meadow, just by my father's house, with my mind almost distracted about pardon from God : and this I had told the Lord in prayer, I must have in such a way as to shew it come from him, or else I could have no satisfaction. I got under the hedge, up to my knees in snow almost, and there, I thought, I would go to prayer ; little thinking what God was going to do with me there. I attempted to pray, and in an instant, was tempted to smother myself there : this, with the old temptation, brought me to my wits end ; and had not God appeared, what would have become of me I know not. I was enabled to kneel down and ask for mercy ; and

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had

had this passage sent with power into my soul, in the 1st epistle of John, i. 7. *And the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all Sin.* I felt pardon brought into my soul, and was now satisfied I had not sinned, as I before thought, so against the Holy Ghost as never to be forgiven. But the thought I had of smothering myself in the snow was now handled by the enemy of my soul, to such a degree, that I could not move from the spot where I was; but stood trembling until I had almost sunk to the earth. When the Lord enabled me to put up another prayer unto him, and favoured me with an immediate application of the above-mentioned scripture; which gave me such relief and sweet comfort, that I went home with my soul full of joy, and spent most part of that night in praising God; that his mercy was so freely, and so fully manifested and applied unto me, after so many fears, and dreadful apprehensions of perishing, as I, for a long time, had experienced.

But, notwithstanding this blessed experience of the goodness of my God, I, sometime after, was left to call all in question; and Satan would often terrify my mind with the old temptation, of having committed the unpardonable sin. One night,
when

when I was up stairs to go to bed, I was led to view this in a distant light, as not real, but the cunning craft of the devil to hinder me in going to prayer. I therefore attempted to make it a matter of prayer, and finding much liberty in calling on the Lord, I ventured to ask him, to clear to my soul, whether he had designs of mercy towards me or not; and if he had, to give me to know it, so as to keep me from that distrust, which I knew was so dishonouring him, and uncomfortable unto me. Towards the next morning, I dreamed that I saw a bright angel come flying unto me, with a letter in his hand, and gave it into my hand: when I had taken it, he, looking, as I thought, very wishfully in my face, said, "That is sent you from the King of kings, and the signature it bears, is from the broad seal of glory." He then flying away, I began to look on the letter, which, I thought, shone like the blaze of fire, and had a large seal on it of pure gold: when I opened it, I read these lines wrote, I thought, in letters of gold:

His blood is thy pardon,
His blood is thy plea;
His blood is thy all,
Its thy advocate—see!

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When

When I awoke, I felt exceeding happy ; and, in a little time, my mind was blessed again with these words, coming with more than usual power ; *The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.* These things, under God, set my mind free from the temptation of having committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

The words of the supposed letter, I never have, nor do I think ever shall, forget : and to this day, the sight of it seems fresh before my eyes. In the forenoon of that day, I mentioned the words to a friend, living at *Alderbury*, who wrote it in a book : when he had done so, a temptation struck my mind, in an instant, that I should not have made it known, as it was only made known unto me : but this I was led to view as a design of Satan's, to rob me of the peace of my mind, and to prevent encouragement unto others ; but God did not suffer this to prevail.

This dark and dismal path,
My reader, I have trod ;
Supported by rich grace,
And saved by my God.
I'm thus far come, his praise to tell,
Who rais'd me from the mouth of hell.

CHAP. IV.

AFTER this encouragement I had experienced from the free favour of the Lord, I felt my soul enlarged, and, in a sweet manner, drawn out to the Lord.

The next Lord's day, I made a great account of, in my mind; purposing to go to *Newmill*, and hoping to find comfort there; nor was I disappointed; my dear friend, Mr. *Blane*, preached from Rom. iii. 26. *To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* And my soul was so abundantly blessed with a view of God's method of justifying sinners in his sight, that my soul seemed as if it would have leaped out of my body, so elated with joy, all the time of the sermon. When worship was over, I singled myself out from all the company, and made my way home: and, as I was going across a field—which spot I shall never forget—the blessed God was graciously

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pleased

pleased to shine into my soul, in such a manner, as to give me, by faith, as clear a discovery of my soul's justification, as I could behold the sun, at noon day, with my bodily eyes: nor do I think I shall ever forget the circumstance to my dying hour. This, with the dream I had just before, gave such divine delight to my soul, that I knew not how to contain myself for joy. This circumstance the Lord has often made of the greatest use to my mind since, as you will hereafter find stated.

My reader will observe, that though I have never forgot that time, nor never could doubt but at that time the Lord revealed himself unto me, as *the Lord my righteousness*; yet there has been many times since, in which Satan has tried to make me call it in question; and to sink me into despair, when my mind has not felt for the present, but only enabled to look back, and remember God from that place and time. And this I have often found comfort from, when all besides has failed; which has often made me think of the words of *Hart*, when alluding to a sense he was favoured with, of pardon from God. At one particular time he says—

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This promise oft I call to mind,
 As through some painful paths I go ;
 And secret consolation find,
 And strength to fight with every foe.

And this is my language, respecting the before-mentioned scripture.

After I was thus favoured of the Lord, I spent some time in uninterrupted joy and happiness ; and found my soul much drawn out unto the Lord, for a knowledge of Jesus, and him crucified : and this desire so prevailed over my mind, that I do not know, at that time, that I wished for any thing else ; nor could I pray for scarce any thing besides, for some time.

I now found liberty to enter the closet frequently every day ; and could often find liberty and pleasure in calling on the Lord for an hour or two together. One day, that scripture came, with power, to my mind, in the 1st epistle to the Corinthians, ii. 2. *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* This still increased my desire to know a crucified Jesus ; and I was fully persuaded, there was something to be seen and known in and from Jesus, that might well put a soul upon renouncing all for a knowledge of him. I was directed, with this exercise of mind, into a closet,

closet, in my aunt's house, adjoining my father's house, where I had the happiness to be delightfully engaged with God, for some considerable time. After I arose from my knees, and was about to leave the closet, I felt my mind powerfully inclining to go to prayer again, which I could not omit. In this exercise with my dear God, I was suddenly melted into a flood of tears, and, with much difficulty, asked the Lord, to let me know his dear, crucified Son ; nor was the Lord offended ; for immediately I had such things impressed on my mind as I never knew before. I thought I saw Jesus, with the wounds of his hands, feet, and sides, all open. Nor is it in my power to say, that I did, or did not, see something with my bodily eyes ; I was too far gone for this : but this I know, I saw so much with the eyes of my soul, as laid me flat on the floor ; nor could I arise for some time—I think about an hour. At this time, I thought my heart would burst, while tears were running, in abundance, down my face ; and no soul can think how awful and hateful sin appeared, and what inward anguish my soul felt. While thus weeping, groaning, and rejoicing at the feet of a dear, crucified Lord, the scenes of *Gethsemane* and *Calvary*, were here

here opened to my soul, in such a manner, as could not be, by all the preaching in the world : and when I arose from the floor, I felt my soul possessed of a desire, that the Lord would, sometime or other, help me to make known that blessed Jesus unto others ; and began, from this time, to persevere in praying, that the Lord would sometime make a preacher of me ; nor could I ever omit this in prayer, though I often wondered, that I should pray for such a thing ; and could not think why the Lord should suffer me so to pray ; and what seemed most extraordinary to me was, that I always found much liberty and firm faith in so praying. The only thing I had in view was this—that I might make a crucified Jesus known. Nor do I think but what I should have preached as legal as any of the preachers of the present day, if it had not been for such experience. But, blessed be God ! I cannot forget the closet, and my bleeding Jesus there ; nor do I wish to preach a sermon while I live, but as Jesus the sum and substance of it.

I was now favoured with sweet nearness with my God ; and was enabled to spend much of my time with the blessed Jesus in my room and closet ; and found much encourage-

encouragement from this scripture, Hosea, vi. 3. *Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord.*

About this time, I had a new pair of shoes provided me, which I put on the next Lord's day, and it was snow up to the knees, and continued to snow all the day; however, I set out to *Newmill*, not thinking what would follow, from going in the new shoes I had on; if I had, I should have chose to went without any, rather than them. But I went, sometimes above my knees in snow, and often almost up to my knees in water; at length, through the mercy of God, I reached the place, wet and cold as I was, and sat as comfortable as ever I did in my life. Mr. *Blane* preached from this text, 2d epistle to the Corinthians, i. 20. *For all the promises of God in him, are yea; and in him, amen, unto the glory of God, by us.* The promises were most sweetly opened and discoursed of, indeed; and many made mention of, that I had been blessed with a sweet acquaintance with the power and preciousness of.

I went from this place so divinely blessed in my mind, that I travelled home again, up to my knees in snow and water, without knowing any thing of the way I went,

or

or even a step that I took. When I got home, and entered the house, I was immediately asked, "Where I had been?" I said, "To *Newmill*." "Let me look at your shoes," said my mother; with that, I put my leg and foot towards her, and a strange condition it was in, the Lord knows! my new shoes looked like old rough brown paper, and seemed as if they were just dropping in pieces. My mother told me, "If I was ever so cold, I should not come to the fire, I might go and warm myself amongst my crew; and as to the shoes, I should not have them to wear, nor never have another pair bought for me." Then, turning to my father, who was then at home, said, "Will you allow this going on?" and he, to prevent her noise, said, "No, it must not, nor shall not be:" and said a many hard things, which cut me to the heart; because he had always been on my side, and I believed he would be so; being a man whose conscience would not suffer him to oppose truth, though he knew nothing of its power.

I was soon ordered out of the house, and went into my aunt's house, where I found them all as badly engaged; I began to wonder what was to done with me; when

when that promise came to my mind, in Deut. xxxiii. 25. *Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days so shall thy strength be.* This set my mind at ease in this circumstance, and enabled me to bear all they could say or do at this time.

The following evening, I was closely beset by my youngest aunt and my mother, about going to meeting, and said, "I should go to church;" I said, "I would not any more, unless I found my own mind inclined so to do." I said, "I thought church-ministers, and their people, were all in the dark; and the Bible says, *If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch together.*" When my aunt said, "She wished the Bible, and all my crew, were burning in hell together." The impression of which, I think, I shall never lose as long as I live.

Some days after, I had an opportunity of speaking to my father alone; when he informed me, "He wished me to go where I liked best; and not to mind what he said when in the house, as he only said it before them, but with no design to hurt me." Here I found a plainer path than I expected I should have done; for which, I desire to acknowledge the goodness of my God.

After

After this, I found my mind at liberty to think over the many great and precious promises that I had heard treated of from the pulpit, and found from them abundant matter for prayer. I now spent most of my time in the chamber, reading of the Bible, and, as I before said, in the closet in prayer.

Now a sweet field seemed to be opening to my soul, of the riches of God's most holy word, day by day. Many precious parts of scripture became matters of study with me at this time, that in Isaiah, xxviii. 16. *Therefore, thus saith the Lord God; behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.* From which scripture, I often found my hopes encouraged, and Christ made precious to my soul; another scripture, that used to employ mind, was this, in Rom. ix. 33. *As it is written, behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.* With that portion, in Isaiah, xlv. 17. *But Israel shall be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed, nor confounded, world without end.* And some scriptures in the 1st epistle of Peter, ii. 4. 7. *To whom coming, as unto a living stone;*

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disallowed

disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious. And verse the 7th. Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious. And that scripture so engaged my mind, that I wrote a sermon on it, before any one knew that I had any particular exercise of mind, in the word of God, in Titus, ii. 13, 14. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

At this time, I used to compose hymns; nearly to the amount of one hundred. And some time after this, I met with a young man, named *Christopher Bedford*, whom the Lord was pleased to make spiritually acquainted with me; and he was also a distant relation.

In the following spring, I constantly went out in an evening, to the top of an high hill, where was a large deep dell; about a mile out of the village, just by a wood side; where I used to read a chapter, and go to prayer, when I was alone: which dell was my college, as you will hereafter be informed, where the Lord trained me up for the ministry in part.

This young man, as I have mentioned, after a time, chose to take a walk along
with

with me, and we used to converse about divine things, and found these seasons pleasant. The people of the place seeing us leave all the young people in an evening, and single ourselves out, began to form their ideas about us; and, in a little time, my friends let me know, that it was said, that we went out a sodomiting. This made me feel strange, indeed; but my conscience soon emboldened me, bearing sure testimony on my side, that I never had such a thought, if they had. However, I never told my friend *Bedford*; and whether he ever heard, I knew not. My answer was, "Any person was at liberty to follow us every evening, and see for themselves, if they pleased:" and so they often did, until they were quite weary.

The next thing they said was, "We went a snaring:" and I, one evening, going out by myself, was followed, to see if I came home with a hare. When I went into my dell, where I had many sweet hours with my God, they thought they were quite sure I had set a snare there: but it was not me, it was the Lord that was the snarer. I was found on my knees, at prayer with my God; and was a little surprised, when I arose, to find a person passing from the mouth of the dell; but

more, to find the poor, wicked wretch go to hear the gospel after this.

I found this was soon made manifest and known: and when out in an evening afterwards, they would laugh, and say, "The Whitfieldite was going to bawl under some hedge." However, this young man and I became intimate friends, and continued all the time we abode in that place, and so remain unto this day; and, under the blessing of God, were often the means of good unto each other: he not being able to read, I often was blessed in quoting scriptures, and giving some thoughts on them, in our conversation together. We went to *Newmill* together, a few times: but soon after this, there came a minister to the chapel at *Berkhamsted*, who was an exceeding sound and experimental preacher, and meeting very much with our feelings, we sometimes went unto the chapel; my friend *Bedford*, in a general way, and I, very frequently: and finding the word much blessed unto my soul, at length joined that people in Christian communion, and continued with them until, from principle, I commenced baptist; but still esteem my independent brethren.

After some time, one Mr. *Childs* was sent to preach at the chapel, and the other

other pastor removed. This man had his very soul, apparently, in the work, and was a very engaging preacher, owned and blessed unto most, in one way or the other, that attended his ministry, and abundantly unto my soul.

At this time, I enjoyed sweet Sabbaths ; and, for the most part, a comfortable walk with my God.

About this time, I was one evening at the house in *Alderbury*, where this minister preached once a fortnight, and, after some conversation, they locked the door ; and I, suspecting their intention, said, " I must go home : " but the answer was, " You must go to prayer before you go. " This put me in such a tremble, that I thought I could not escape falling to the ground ; which I think I should, if I had not sat down in a chair. But I found I must engage ; and never did I go in such a manner unto the throne of grace before or since. I thought the house seemed to be running round, and the chair I kneeled against, moving from me ; and my heart beat in such a manner, that I could scarce speak plain ; and what I did say, I am sure I know not. But after this, I became often engaged with some friend or other, and at length, at prayer-meetings, where

the minister was present. I was now blessed with privileges, and in them, and began to think it was sweet travelling in such a way; but I was soon turned into another path: for at this time, my father had a large job of work, of one Squire *Shepherd*, living at *Thourington* in *Buckinghamshire*, within four miles of *Buckingham*, and thirty from my home: and, at this time, my father took me to the business along with him unto this place; and a trying circumstance it was.

I was now forced to leave my minister, and all my Christian friends, and go thirty miles distance: but what was worse, I was going into a building, amongst the vainest set of men, oftentimes, as can be found on earth, and such was most there; and this awful circumstance attending—I knew no Christian person, nor where to find such a character, in that part of the country: but I thought I should find some meeting, and so get acquainted with some serious people. But when I came there, I might as well have been in the deserts of *Arabia*; the people knew nothing of any meeting, nor was there any within some miles. As a proof of the people's surprising ignorance, I give you this instance:—In the house where we lodged, one evening the
woman

woman of the house, about fourscore years of age, was laughing at me, because I wanted to go home, and said, "The people be the same here, I suppose, in shape and make, as they be there; for," said she, "one man, you know, made us all." "No," said my father, "one God, you mean." "Well, one God, if you will," said the woman; "its all one thing I suppose." And this woman was as wise as any one I ever met with there, in matters of religion.

I was here confined amongst these people. Of a Sabbath day, the Squire would have all the workmen to appear at church, which I refusing to do, became exposed to his ill will, and all the contempt the workmen could cast upon me. My Sabbaths were now spent in groaning and crying; and week after week, in misery. About once a month I used to go home; and no one can tell what a mercy I thought it, to spend a Sabbath with my friends at the house of my God. But, being there in the winter, the weather become so bad, that I was confined to this miserable place for above three months. But a worse misery than this followed; for my father, who was given to drinking, would be sometimes, for a week together, at a public house, which

which caused me to go after him ; and was often enticed to stay with him for a day or two together.

Being now out of the use of all means, and from every Christian friend, forced to hear all the public house talk, and almost mad that I could not get my father away ; and knowing how much he would spend, if I left him by himself. In this situation, I found my mind so darkened, that I knew little better than the old woman did. As to prayer, I left it almost off ; and such a deadness seized my soul, that I became almost as careless as any one amongst them ; and found a mind to join such company as theirs. I went to their dancings a few times, but always found something in my mind that filled me with a kind of dread, so that I was nothing but a subject of misery in it all ; nor did I meet with one moment's satisfaction in any of these things : and such was the state of my soul at this time, that I had none in religion neither.

Some time after this, my father had a man from *Tring* down to this building, to work, as a journeyman, that was a dissenter, and lodged at this public house ; he did me more mischief than the carnal creatures I was then amongst : for he

seemed

seemed so well satisfied in that house, and with the company, that I began to think, if such a man as he, who had gone to hear the gospel so long, could be easy there : why should not I? This shews what carnal professors are capable of doing. May God make it a warning to as many such as read this account.

One day, the publican said to me, when I was down at the house, "What is that man that lodges here." "Oh," said I, with a laugh, "he's one of the meeting sort." I had no sooner spoke, but I found my mind was like hell; and fell a stamping in the yard, and crying "Oh, what have I done? what have I done?" With this, I went away, determined in my mind to keep from that house for ever. But, Oh! the weakness of human efforts: it was but a little time before my father prevailed on me to go there and dine on a Lord's day with him, and some of the workmen; and such a Sabbath it was as I shall never forget! After dinner, a news-paper was brought and laid upon the table; I took it up, and the first thing I read, was of a man that had cut his throat; and immediately Satan (I believe) was permitted to enter into my mind, and for a whole year to keep possession there. I got up from the
table,

table, and went away into a meadow, some distance from the village, under a hedge, with a full intention to cut my throat: when I came to a certain spot of ground, under the hedge, that was a small dell, I thought I would do it there; and entering the dell with that design, I began to think of my dear friends in the church, and also of my mother and relations at home; and I thought, surely if they felt what I did, they would never say another word against religion: and wondered what they would say, when they heard I had cut my throat. I then thought of putting it by, until I had seen them once more. When this temptation came into my mind (no doubt from from the devil) "You have apostatized from God, and you had better kill yourself, and not live to be reflected on by all your friends." My poor confused mind was so worked up, at this time, by the devil and sin, that I took a small knife out of my pocket, and was just going to obey the devil, when I thought I heard somebody say, "Go to prayer before you die;" and, looking round with great confusion, expecting to see some one just by; when I made a diligent search, and could find no person any where about, I was exceedingly frightened; and entered the dell again, and kneeling

kneeling down, began to call on the Lord, and found liberty granted unto me in so doing. When I was in prayer, there was something as if it would have torn my mind to pieces; but I was enabled to go on. When I had done prayer, I found no mind to cut my throat, but came out of the dell, saying, "Surely God is in this place, and I knew it not."

I went away to my lodgings, and soon went to bed; but there I could not lie with any more ease, than a person in deep despair. The temptation seemed to grow stronger and stronger; I thought the devil was by the bed side, and sometimes thought I felt him on the bed; and drops of sweat ran down my face, from the fear that I had, that he would be permitted to take me away.

When I was at the building, I was soon taken notice of; they told my father that I was mad, and must soon be sent to Bedlam. If I saw a knife, it caused me such anguish, that I could not bear myself, nor dare I make use of one for as much as a year, but used to gnaw my food: I threw my pocket knife into the Squire's river. About this time, my mother came there to see us, and finding me in such a low, dejected state of mind, thought

I was

I was not well. But, in a few days, finding I was for no company, and observing that I scarce ever spoke, she concluded, I was unhappy in being so long from home, and proposed to my father, that I should go home with her. This, at some times, would have given me a great deal of pleasure, but, at this time, afforded me none; for I had nothing prevailing on my mind and thoughts, night or day, but cutting my throat, or hanging or drowning myself. One day, whilst my mother was there, I was sent by my father to *Buckingham*, and going great part of the way by a river, I made a stand, I think, a dozen times, to end my life, by jumping into it; and with inconceivable difficulty it was that I returned again.

I found my body weakening every day, from the continual distress of my mind, for I could get no sleep in the night, but only weep and sigh, and sweat and tremble, oftentimes, so as to shake the bed under me. When I was about the building, I was terrified almost out of my life, for the carpenters tools and the joiners lay about in different places, and as often as I saw them, I was tempted to kill myself with some of their edged tools. When I mounted the scaffold to work, I was often
obliged

obliged to lie down at full length, and clench my hands fast to the poles, from the temptation I had to cast myself down; and oftentimes we were fifty feet from the ground.

From these things, I became almost useless in the business, and my father thought I might as well go home, for I was very little use there; and sometimes would reflect on me, for being such a poor helpless creature; which used to try me often, and caused me to go away and cry in some retired place. I sometimes thought I would tell him what was the cause; but always found something to hinder me.

When my mother went home, I was kept one week after her, on account of some particular business then in hand, in which my father could not do without me. But my being left behind, was no grief to me at this time; for my mind was incapable of being made happy with the thoughts of going home, or any where else; unless it had been where I could have lost the horrible temptation then on my soul. But, towards the time I was to set out home, I felt some hope, that an interview with my friends might be of some use unto my mind.

When the morning came, in which I set out on the journey, I walked about

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five miles out of the thirty, I was so faint as to be obliged to sit down to rest, when I was tempted to think, I was fastened to the ground and could not get up, and that Satan would fetch me from that place; when, on a sudden, I sprang from the ground, under the desperate exercise of my mind, with that force, as pitched me on my head, near a yard from the place where I sat. When I arose, I made all the haste I could in pursuing my journey; but was tempted to think I was going backwards, and that I should never get home; and there seemed to be such a mist over my eyes, and horrible gloom over every thing around me, that, whether my reader will believe it or not, I was obliged to stop, and pull my eyes open several times, to satisfy myself that I could see the trees. Often I thought it was the close of the evening, and that I must be out all night.—This was in the first part of my journey.

When I got into *Wadon-Chace*, which I passed through in my way home, I was tempted to break up a stick, from amongst the underwood, twist it into a withe, and hang myself on one of the trees there: to which temptation my mind seemed inclined to give way, but always was forced

to say, " I will go a little further first, and then I will do it."

I was now in the chace, a very gloomy place indeed, and so intricate, that few people that knew nothing of it, could pass through without being lost; at the same time, I thought the ground was going backwards as I went forwards, and I getting none the nearer. Every thing looked so dark around me, and so strange, that I did not know the very place I before was conversant with; nor did I entertain the least thought that I should ever get home. And Satan was all this while making a handle of this, and striving to work by it thus—" You find you cannot get home, and you take every step towards it in vain, you had better kill yourself out of the way." And so I thought, and fixed on a large oak tree, that stood just on the outside of the chace, in my way home; if I could reach so far, I purposed to hang myself there.

After a time, I came into that riding (as was so called) which led me down to the oak; and no one can think how I trembled and sweat every step I took here: at length I came within sight of the tree, and soon came unto it. When I

came there, I found God had completely outwitted the devil; for there was not a bough that I could reach by a great deal, on all that tree. I tried to climb up the body, but that was all in vain, it being so exceeding large. After musing a time, I went on, and came to a rising piece of ground, from whence I could see a wood within a mile of home: I wondered when I should reach that place, and was never more distressed than now; thinking I could see so near home, and was so far off from it, and, as I thought, very unlikely ever to reach it.

When I got to a place, called *Mursley*, I got some refreshment, and pursued my journey; and was much surprised to find it was but ten o'clock in the forenoon, when I thought it was near evening. After I had walked about twenty miles, I was so tried all the way in my mind, that I seemed completely lost; and though I was passing through a village I had passed before, and knew very well, I could not satisfy my mind what place it was, nor could I be satisfied that I was in the right way. I thought I had the chaces till to pass through, and that I should hang myself there: nor could I recollect a step of ground that I had gone.

In

In this bewildered state of mind, and with these temptations, I passed all my way home.

When I came to my friends house, I did not seem in the least pleased; nor did the sight of my Christian friends seem that to me as it had done before. When I sat down in my friends house, I was all the while of a tremble and sweat; and seemed every moment as if I must take a knife out of the drawer, and go into the garden and cut my throat.

After I had been at home a few days, I found the temptation get stronger and stronger. On the Lord's day, I went to the chapel at *Berkhamsted*. I thought I loved the sight of the people; and when the minister came into the pulpit, I seemed as if I must have spoke, and asked him how he did. But, in a very little time, I felt as if all the devils in hell were entered into me: I was obliged to stop my mouth with my pocket handkerchief, until I had almost choaked myself, to keep from swearing and blaspheming against the Lord, and his word, amidst all the people. Nor can any one imagine what thoughts filled my mind against the Lord, and about the Trinity; I think I had the very master-piece of hell, raked, I think, from the

very bottom of the infernal pit, (if such was a just expression) but, as it is a bottomless pit, I suppose the devil fetched it as far as he could from God, to set me as far as he could from him. The very thought, whenever it enters my mind, makes my blood run cold, without feeling it as I did then. I have often wished I could tell it to some kind experienced friend or other, but I think I never can, nor dare I write it here. I should like to know, if I could, if ever any one had such thoughts besides myself? but do not expect I ever shall. I have had much exercise of mind, about writing it down, thinking sometime or other it might be a word in season, as I could write it from heart-feeling. But here I must look to my God for pardon, if I am wrong in not doing it; for I dare not, I cannot. As I sat in the chapel, I wished for a knife, and wanted, I thought, to cut the minister's tongue out, and to cut his cheeks off from his face, and, at least, I thought I should like to kill him and quarter him. Oh, how did this terrify my mind and soul! being against a man I so dearly loved, and for whom I had often thought I could have laid down my life: and miserable, beyond expression, did I return from the chapel home.

In

In the course of the following week, I was so tempted to make away with myself, that I went into the garden, and unbuttoned my shirt-collar, to cut my throat : just as I was putting up the knife, that scripture came to my mind with power, *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life.* Afterwards I went into the barn, and was just a going to hang myself, having tied a string over a beam on purpose ; but thinking of the word of God, and wondering if there was any help for me there, was prevented by that scripture, 1 Cor. x. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able ; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

Being thus delivered in these trying cases, I was spared to see another Sabbath. When the minister came in the morning to preach at *Alderbury*, I went to the meeting with my mind full of temptations, and as miserable as I could well be. He preached from 2 Corinthians, i. 3. *The father of all mercies, and God of all comfort.*

At this time the Lord permitted me to hear and feel ; I felt my heart ready to break

break with sorrow, that I had departed so from my God; and saw my sin in that light, as made me a continual weeper for some time: and put me upon praying for mercy more than I had done for some time past, with some distant hopes, that I should be favoured with forgiveness from my God. The dreadful temptations that my soul laboured under, notwithstanding the glimmerings of mercy my dear God favoured me with, did daily grow stronger and stronger, until at length I was so reduced in my bodily strength, as to be incapable of going across the garden.

At this time I expected I should soon die, and be left to the power of the enemy, and perish. I thought it was of no use to pray, though I could not omit it; for God had no designs of mercy respecting me. Thus passing night and day in misery, and almost absolute despair for some time, I at length arrived to an evening, in which I felt as great conflict of soul, from as opposite exercises of mind, as ever man did, I think. In the course of the day, the temptation to make away with myself was so strong, that drops of sweat was running down my face most part of the day.

In the morning of the same day, my mother came into my room, and finding
me

me in a violent perspiration, said, "She was sure I must have the doctor, or else I should never get well." When I was got up, my mother and aunt went into the room, and found the bed wet through with sweat, and afterwards came to me to know how I felt, and where I was ill; but my complaint was of that sort, and in that part, as was no use to tell unto them; I, therefore, kept it to myself.

In the course of the day, Doctor *Helaly*, of *Berkhamsted*, came, who had always attended me in illness from a child, and said, "I must have help soon, or else he could do me no good." I said, "I would stay a day or two longer, and then see how I should be." When night came, I went to bed, and after lying down about ten minutes, I thought something was tearing me to pieces, and groaned in that manner as quite alarmed my relations. I thought I must have got out of the bed, and cut my throat; and often seemed as if something was pulling me, and I, to make resistance, hung by the bed as fast as I possibly could. I thought if I could keep in the bed, I could not do it, for I had no knife. At length I was tempted to pinch my throat, and choak myself, which I found it very difficult to shun; nor could I persuade myself,

self, but Satan was all the while close by the bed side, and I dare not let go the bed, for fear he should take hold of me. Soon, I thought, I saw the pit of hell opened, and dreadful flashes of fire coming forth. This made me jump up in my bed, like one desperate, and I fell on my knees before the Lord, and prayed for mercy and immediate help from his hand. When I was thus engaged, you cannot think what horrible feelings I had, thinking the devil would take hold of me and bear me away as soon as I had done. But, concluding in prayer, I laid down, and began to think over the promises of God sent to me at different times; and thinking if ever any one trusted in a promise, and was left to perish; when it suddenly came to my mind, "How do you know you have any thing to do with the promises?" When, notwithstanding all the dreadful trials of my soul, that time I have stated, in which the Lord appeared unto me, coming from *Newmill*, as the Lord my righteousness, came sweetly to my mind, and gave me encouragement to pray, which I attempted lying in my bed; and, while engaged, that scripture came with power unto me, in Deuter. xxxiii. 25. *As thy days, so shall thy strength be.* This was

was a word in season indeed, and did my soul good.

In the former part of this night, I was enabled to rise, and fall on my knees seven times before the Lord; and to my grief, remember unto this day, promising the Lord, that if he would deliver me out of that awful state, I would never distrust him any more. This was the effect, no doubt, of my ignorance; but my prayer the Lord was pleased mercifully to regard.

After being much spent with these exercises, I fell into a doze; and opening my eyes, about the time the sun was rising, I felt much horror at the thoughts of a pleasant day; thinking all the beauties of creation would only augment my wretchedness, while I was in such a state. But falling again into a doze, for about two hours, or rather more, I awoke, and looking up at the window, saw the sun shining very bright in upon me, and, with a deep sigh, I said, "Oh, that the Sun of Righteousness did but shine upon my soul, as the natural sun doth on my bed!" And feeling my mind going out in a way of prayer, I arose, and fell on my knees on the bed, and was blessing God that I had not opened my eyes in hell, and praying for deliverance, when the set time of my dear
 Jesus's

Jesus's grace unto my worthless soul was fully come ; that scripture, darting like a flash of lightening into my mind, in Malachi, iv. 2. *But unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings ; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall.* The temptation was rooted from my mind and soul in an instant : nor did God suffer me to feel it any more for many years, and then but slightly, compared with what I had felt before this deliverance took place.

At this time I was so happy, that I found myself not able to bear the rays of mercy then shining in upon my soul, but fell flat on my face, and in that posture cried, " It is too much, Lord ! why to me ? why to me ? " And rising on my knees again, with my eyes wide open—a circumstance my reader should pay attention to here, in particular—I saw a light above the brightness of the sun, though the sun was then shining in upon me, through the window, very bright indeed ; and the light I saw was much brighter than ever I have seen the sun at noon day. Amidst the light, I saw something most glorious, that attracted my notice for as much as one minute : who or what it was, I do not pretend to say, but so it was, I
do

do affirm ; and could, with a safe conscience, if I lay on my death-bed, say the same.

When I arose from my knees, this scripture came to my mind, in Isaiah, liv. 17. *No weapon that is formed against thee, shall prosper ; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.* And so I found it true then, and ever since ; and trust I shall for ever.

I now dressed myself, and went down stairs with a shining and cheerful face, so that my friends who were carnal, saw, in an instant, there was a manifest difference in me, and supposed I was better ; and so I was, God knows : being saved from a most awful state of trial, and brought into a most glorious liberty, by the rich grace of my God alone. I now wanted no doctor, the Physician of Value had paid me a visit of mercy, and cured all my complaints, free of all expence.

I soon got stronger, and became able to go out to work again. When I returned to my father, I soon became a burthen ; for he wished me to go to the building as soon as I was up and dressed, which I could not

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do :

do: for at this time I had much to say unto my God, and, blessed be his name! I felt my soul much with him. I cannot say but it mortified me in my feelings, sometimes, and at other times I paid no attention unto it, to hear my father scolding, and the workmen laughing at me, for coming after them into the building in the morning; however, the Lord kept me at a distance from every one of them, in my mind, and mercifully enabled me to walk near unto him.

I now spent all my spare time in reading the Bible, and going into some field to pray; and found none of their company suitable unto me, no not for one moment, and was glad to shun it.

At this time I found many things pleasant unto me in the book of God, particularly that scripture, and the former verses, in Luke, iv. 9. *And he brought him from Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence.* I did not now wonder, that I should be tempted to make away with myself, in any way or manner that I was; and could, with unspeakable pleasure, see my deliverance, from the glorious conquest of my dear Saviour.

After

After some time, there were a few jobs fell out nearer home, and I was sent to do them. After I came home in an evening, I used to go to my dell, read my Bible, and pray; for which purposes, I used to sit and kneel on a bank, about the middle of the dell; the print of my knees and feet being visible there, when I became pastor at *Dunstable*—the grass being worn away, and quite holes in the ground.

These were happy seasons. Here I frequently met with my God, and found precious truths from God's word opened unto my mind; and was enabled to water them with prayer, on my little hillock in the dell. I now could enjoy the sight of my minister, hear him with pleasure, and attend prayer-meetings with comfort; and found my meditation of the Lord to be sweet, and oftentimes abundantly sweet unto my soul.

While I was thus favoured with being about home, the minister and friends had, unknown to me, talked together about getting me to speak, amongst a few of them, from some passage in scripture, and then to send me to an academy. I had been praying, for some time before, in much earnestness, that God would make me useful unto his church, in making Jesus's grace known;

but had no thought of such a thing, until the evening before it was put to me. Being at prayer, I felt an impression on my mind, that God would call me to preach; and which I felt my mind much affected about in prayer. The same night, I dreamed, I was going up the side of *Alderbury* hill, next to the town, when my friend *Christopher Bedford*, I thought, came running after me; and I, perceiving him making his way towards me, stopped: and when he came up to me, said, "You must go back with me." "For what?" said I; "To preach," said he. I said, "Where?" he replied, "In the church; for it is as full of people as ever it can hold, and they understand you are to preach unto them." "O dear!" said I, "I cannot preach." "But you must," said he, "and go with me now." "If I do then," I said, "I will preach from John, iii. 3. *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*: for I am sure," I said, "that scripture was never opened in that church." "Well, do so," he replied; "only let us go, because the people are waiting." Accordingly I went with him, and entering the church, I found it so full of people that I could scarce get in. At length I got to the fount, where they sprinkle infants,

fants, and got, I thought, up into it, and there preached from the before-mentioned words. When I awoke, I thought, with much concern, about my dream.

The next day, the same young man told me, one Mrs. *Culverhouse* wished to see me; at whose house the minister of the chapel preached. Accordingly, I went, and the business was, for me to exercise my thoughts on some scripture, which they wished me to speak from, on the next Sabbath evening. This I much opposed; but, after a time, agreed to try before a few, which I did, from these words, *Chosen of God, and precious.* 1 Peter, ii. 4. This being a suitable passage for me, as I had nothing that I wished to talk about, but a precious, crucified Jesus; and I found a sweet degree of liberty in giving my thoughts on these words: but was exceedingly perplexed in my mind afterwards, about what I had done; and was afraid that I had been doing that, I had no authority from God for; I thought I would never attempt to speak any where, nor at any time, unless it was from the earnest request of Christian friends, and their sincere desire. And to this purpose of mind, I stood steadfast, and have reason to bless God for it unto this day.

I thought all night, after I had spoken from the before-mentioned scripture, at times, that I should never be asked any more by any one friend; but the next day, I found I was mistaken here, for I was informed, by some of them, that they wished me to speak once a week; and, if I could, on a Sabbath evening. After much entreaty, I agreed to speak on a Wednesday evening, and have none but Christian friends present; which I did for a few weeks, and was prevailed on to speak on a Sabbath evening, at which meeting a few people more than our own, as we called them, were to be admitted. I spoke from these words, *What think ye of Christ?* And a great many people stood round the house, amongst the rest, some of my friends at home; and, when I went home, they looked very much confounded and ashamed, I suppose, of my obtaining the name of a presbyterian parson.

It was now spread all about the town, that *Francis Hews* preached, and the enquiry was, "When doth he preach again? I'll go and hear him." This was the cry of almost every one in the place. One of our friends told me, about the middle of the following week, that I must preach again on the Lord's day evening; "For,"

he

he said, "he thought half the people in the place were enquiring of him, when I preached, and if I would not preach on the next Sabbath evening?" and some of the inhabitants of the town came, and asked me very kindly, if I would preach on Lord's day next, in the evening? and, if I did, to let it be known. These solicitations I knew not what to do with, but laid them before a man, who had been some years in a profession of the gospel, named *Amos Lea* (who is now, I trust, in glory). He said, "I am sure you will be wrong, if you do not preach;" and fixed the meeting at his own house, and the time, and spread it all about the town.

When the Sabbath evening came, I went at the time to the house; and, to my surprise, found the house so full, that it was with much difficulty I got in: and numbers of people stood round about the house, and in the yard. Besides, I was so crowded when I was engaged, that it was with much difficulty I got my handkerchief out of my pocket. I spoke from Matt. xi. 28. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* I was blessed with much sweet liberty, and sweet feelings too; and very
great

great attention was given by every one at that time.

The next Sabbath evening, I preached at the same village, in another friend's house, who had agreed with the other to have the meetings at their houses by turns; from this scripture, *Rejoice evermore.* 1 Thes. v. 16. And the next Sabbath evening at the other friend's house, from Luke, xi. 13. These subjects seemed to be owned and blessed of the Lord, and numbers crowded to hear the word.

At this time I was sent for by my father, and he had carelessly informed them in the building, that I was at home preaching; this intelligence he had unknown to me. When I came there, they began to hiss about the parson, and talked of setting me up to give them a lecture; and asked Mr. *Smith* (the Squire's steward) to borrow the church-parson's gown for me. I told them I would give them a lecture without the gown. But when they found that I did not mind them, they dropped this, and took another method.

My father being gone home, and leaving me in care of the work, with a journeyman from *Buckingham*, amidst these rebels; had I not been under the care and keep-
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ing of my God, I should soon have lost my life. I have often since thought of that scripture, in 1 Chronicles, xvi. 21, 22. *He suffered no man to do them wrong ; yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.*

One day I was going up a ladder, of fifty rounds, and some of them, when I was gone to breakfast, had drove a round out of the side of the ladder, near the top, and fixed it so as to appear firm ; when I stepped on it, it immediately gave way, and I fell flat on the ladder, and clinging my legs round it, slid safe to the bottom. One of them, I heard say, “ Damn him, he is not hurt.” Another said, as if quite innocent, “ What is the matter parson, have you tumbled down ? ” “ No,” said another, “ Only his pulpit is broke.” To which I made no reply ; but looking under the ladder, I saw a broad axe, fixed edge upwards, between two pieces of wood, just where I was most likely to fall. I asked the reason of that being there ? and they said, it fell from the landing-place. But I knew that was a lie ; for there were no tools up there, but mine and the journeyman’s : however, I would never go up a ladder again, until the labourer had been up and examined

examined it, round by round. But soon after this they found another way.

Being at work in a room, three stories high, where were all bare joists from top to bottom of each of the floors, I had laid some long boards about the joists where I was at work, to walk upon, and, while I was gone to dinner, they put some short bits of boards, so as to make traps, as they called them, and when I went into the room, stepping on one of these, dropped immediately between the joists, and hung by my arms : the labourer being close by, caught hold of me and pulled me up, without any injury being done, more than a little rasing my shins.

Thus God saved me, and sent this scripture to my mind, *Rejoice not against me, O my enemy, when I fall, I shall rise.* And in the afternoon, one of the men in the building came into the room where I was, and stepped on a board, that let him between the joists up to his middle, and hurt him very much ; when one cried out, “ You have laid traps for something.” Thus was that scripture made good, with a witness, in Prov. xxvi. 27. *Whoso diggeth a pit, shall fall therein ; and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.*

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The next thing was, their loosing the cords of a scaffold, many feet from the ground ; but this I discovered as soon as I came up to the scaffold. *Thus the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.* These circumstances are as near as I can think to state them now, it being long since.

When my fortnight was up, my father came down, and I returned home, glad enough to be gone ; nor did I go but a few times more unto that place, but worked nearer home.

When I returned, my friends got me to preaching again ; when the before-mentioned *Amos Lea*, said, " He thought it should not be hid so much, nor confined to that one village." So the next week he went to *Gadsden* and *Hudnall* ; and when at *Hudnall*, he got a house, and told the people there, and at *Gadsden*, that young *Francis Hews* would preach there on next Sabbath evening. This I knew nothing of until he came home, and the next day told me what he had done ; and said, " You must go at the appointed time, and I will go with you." Accordingly, I did, and preached unto a great many people. When I had done, they pressed hard on me to come again, and I soon went again.

On

On a Sabbath evening, when I was obliged to preach in the barn, for the number of people that were there; when I was preaching, a young man came into the barn, amidst all the people, and made his way up to me, with a large piece of bacon, on a small piece of bread, in his hand; the bacon he had gnawed all round and drawn through his teeth, so that it hung in threads all round. This he brought on purpose for me, he himself owned afterwards. When he got just before me, he looked very wishfully in my face, and standing a few minutes, like one in a maze, the tears began to run plentifully down his cheeks; and putting his bread and bacon into his pocket, drew out his handkerchief, and had work enough to keep wiping his eyes, all the time I was preaching: and afterwards became as feeling and constant a hearer, as I ever saw.

In this place I preached very often, for as much as a year and a half; sometimes there, and sometimes at a village near, named *Studham*: one part of the day in one place, and the other part in the other. In both these places, God blessed the word to many souls: fourteen, I remember to this moment in which I am writing; one of whom I have no doubt is in the kingdom

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dom of glory ; the other, living witnesses of my apostleship, *For the seal thereof are they in the Lord.*

At our meetings in these places, the Lord frequently came amongst us, with his presence and power, as many can witness as well as I ; and have told me since, they never were so happy, nor saw such days, as when I preached there. I was followed from place to place, by a great many, young and old, let the weather be what it might ; always crowded with hearers ; and scarce ever preached a sermon, but many appeared to be much affected.

I remember preaching one Sabbath day, in the afternoon, at *Hudnall*, from 1 Tim. i. 15. When I had done, an old man came unto me, crying as if his heart would burst within him, and taking hold of my hand, I looked very wishful at his grey locks, and, bursting into tears, said, “ My dear aged friend, are you come at last ? ” “ Yes,” said he, “ I have staid away as long as I could, but God has brought me at the eleventh hour.” “ Blessed be his name ! ” said I, “ it is better late than never.” “ Yes, so it is,” he said ; “ and I say, blessed be his name too ! that ever he sent you to preach this sermon, as I am
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sure he did." The man is a very honourable member of my church ; and has, evidently, walked in the way of truth ever since, I believe with much sweet enjoyment of God.

The people would be often saying, how plain it was, that I was sent of the Lord ; and see that for me, which then I was much perplexed about ; and laboured under much distress of mind, for some time—about running before I was sent : though I never went, but as called in providence, nor indeed never needed, for plenty of work was found for me to do ; and so, I believe, there is for every one whom the Almighty sends in his name. My prayers and desires were, to be sent by the direction of the Lord, in providence, unto places where the gospel was never preached. I never asked any one about preaching in any place, at any time, I can safely say ; but was always asked to preach before I ever did attempt it ; and can shew how God directed me according to my desires.

The people in this place, I have mentioned, were so urgent for me to preach in the course of the week unto them, as well as a Lords day, that I could not stand against it. I now found work enough in
following

following my business, and preaching two or three times on a Lord's day, and walking ten or fifteen miles often besides: sometimes I preached three times in the course of the week, and always twice. In all this, I knew not what it was to receive one farthing as a recompence, nor did I wish for it; for the work itself, was recompence enough for me.

At this time, the souls of many were fed, and spiritual life appeared in a very conspicuous light; and, for my own part, I was oftentimes sick of love, or overpowered with it, like the church of old. I was all this time very careful to obtain evidence, to satisfy my mind, that I was sent of God, to preach the everlasting gospel; and never desired to obtain the favour or esteem of any people that had a pastor, with a view of preaching amongst them: and indeed, I kept quite from all such, on purpose that it should not be said any minister or people were rendered unhappy through my preaching; nor had I the least desire to preach, at this time, in any meeting-house, but in villages where there was no preaching. I wanted not another man's people, but a people given unto me of God, and such as I might safely call my own, that I might expect to

be my joy, and crown of rejoicing, in the day of Christ; and, blessed be my God! hundreds such have been given unto me. I was satisfied, if I went not amongst ministers, or their people, they could not do any thing by way of introducing me, from what I said amongst any people. Nor have I ever went to a people in my life, statedly, to preach for any time, but under the immediate direction of divine providence, as I shall make it plain to appear.

At this time, I found no rising expectation from any thing I could say, that the people would be blessed or wrought upon; but often wondered, they did not go away and not stand to hear me: and, when the Lord gave me to see that he did bless the word, I had the happiness to caution the people, to beware they did not look to me instead of him, with a heart-felt concern for his praise; and told them often, as many can witness, to be careful they did not rob the Lord of his glory, lest he should hide his face from us. Ever since I have been in the ministry at *Dunstable*, my people well know the same spirit has discovered itself; and, if they are honest, must acknowledge, that I have steadfastly fought against human applause, and shewn my concern for the glory of my God,

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in the preaching of his glorious gospel. I have thought much, in my mind, how unlike this was, to what I heard a man say, after preaching a sermon, and alluding to a part of the subject afterwards, said, "I thought, to be sure, the people must be quite startled, and certainly must feel from such ideas as I delivered; and I thought if there was nothing said to cause feeling before, there was now, for I felt till I sweat." And, indeed, the whole of God's dealings with me, respecting the ministry, are quite unlike what I see now a-days practised by many. The awful charge of running before they are sent, will, I fear, be brought against three parts, out of four, of the ministers of the present day, by the Almighty God.

Some there are, that ask to preach before any one asks them, or even wish them so to do. Others are obliged to creep amongst some minister's people, to have a way opened for them, for the want of a call in providence from the Lord. And some have no spirit to seek after souls scattered abroad, nor a mind to preach to a few souls where God may direct them; but strive, of their own accord, to push themselves before a large auditory of people, some other instrument may have been

means of collecting together, under the hand of God. Such have nothing in conscience, nor yet in providence from God, to support them; nor any motive to induce them to preach, but pride. Others boast of their being called, as they say, by the church they belong to, and by them sent out; and well they leave their going forth with the people, and do not pack it on the Lord; for some such I have known, that could say nothing more than this, to prove their call unto the ministry; and had not one single leading of providence to talk of. But this can never prove a man's call to that work to be of God, if this be all: neither is the best evidence of Christianity in a man, or the brightest parts and greatest gifts, sufficient to prove his call; but the leadings of the Almighty, by grace, on his mind, and opening doors in providence, that appear plain to be of God, and not of man. This is what I shall now endeavour to shew, and lay before my reader, in the dealings of Almighty God with me in this work, in his directions in providence.

Temptations long my soul assail'd,
And over me with power prevail'd,
Till Jesus did appear:
But when he shew'd his rays of grace,
The serpent fled before his face,
And hid his head with fear.

How

How great the pangs my soul then known,
But greater grace was on me shown,
That did my soul release :
Nor I, nor angels, e'er can tell,
When saved from the mouth of hell,
How glorious the grace!

And after this, to send me forth,
To spread abroad his word of truth,
Is greater wonder still ;
And while the same I did reveal,
For him to seal it with his seal,
And pluck their souls from hell.

Must plainly shew his hand in it,
While many to his word submit,
And loud for mercy pray ;
And plainer still will truth attest,
The souls to whom the word was blest,
Are still found in his way.

CHAP. V.

AFTER labouring some time with the people, in the villages I have mentioned, I received an invitation to go to *Northall* to preach ; a place I never was at, and which I knew nothing of, about six miles from the place of my abode ; and, where a Calvinist preacher (so called) had not been known to preach for many years. I went with two or three of my friends, and preached to a people I never saw before, which I knew nothing of. I was crowded with hearers, and received a pressing invitation to come again ; which I did a fortnight afterwards, and found the number of people increasing. I was persuaded to come once a fortnight, on a Sabbath evening, which I agreed to ; and the number of people increased to that degree, that I was obliged to preach out of doors, standing on a table, in the yard belonging to the house of the friend who had invited me, and

and being surrounded with a vast number of people, who all seemed amazed to see me stand there for that purpose: being now but in the eighteenth year of my age, and dressed in a suit of white clothes; I appeared so much like a young boy, that I heard many of the people say, "Poor young creature, I am afraid he can never go on before so many;" and others said, "I hope no one will come to interrupt him, nor offer to do any thing to such a young lad." But this I was not afraid of in the least; for young as I was, the Lord Jesus Christ was so precious to my soul, that I could have been willing to have died in his cause, had it been to his glory.

When I was preaching, there came some men from a publick house, that was very near, sent by some there to abuse me. One of these men, I observed in particular, as he was making his way to me, who had on a drill frock, walked as if his pockets were filled with something very heavy, and interrupted his walking by banging against his legs; and so there was, for he had filled them both with the roughest and sharpest flints he could find, on purpose to throw at my head. When he came up to the people, he fixed himself on the remotest side of them, and just before me;
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he kept his eyes on me, and I kept mine fixed on him. At length, he drew a flint from his pocket, and turning to some of his companions, laughed, and lifted up his arm to throw (as he afterwards owned in my hearing) at my head; a sentence was then going from my lips, that (he afterwards owned) came with such power, as caused him to drop the stone: and that scripture came with such power into my mind, as kept me from being afraid of being hurt, in Matt. xxviii. 20. *And lo, I am with you always unto the end of the world.* Thus the Lord covered my defenceless head, when in open air, and strengthened my heart against the fear of man, which bringeth a snare.

I observed the man as I went on, and saw the tears run down his face at a very great rate, and he trying to get his handkerchief out of his pocket, but could not for the stones; so that he was forced to stand looking at me, for he could not keep his eyes off one minute, with the tears running, and he, with his hands, unloading his pockets, and dropping the flints to the ground: when he had got rid of his cargo, and got his handkerchief out, he had enough to do to cry, and wipe his eyes, all the time I was preaching; and
with

with the riddance of his hellish ammunition, that was to have been spent against me, went his carnal hope *to the moles and to the bats*, (Isaiah, ii. 20.) for that time, and, I hope through mercy, for ever.

When I had done, he was hanging about the pales in the yard, and crying in a most bitter manner ; I said to a friend, " That man wishes to speak with me, I will go to him : " accordingly, I did, and he said, " He could not have went away, if he had not spoke unto me. " Taking me by the hand, and bursting again into tears, he said, " What a wicked man am I ! I came here on purpose to kill you, but I hope you will forgive me. " " That, " I said, " is done ; may God forgive you, and give you to know it ! " He said, he had one favour to ask of me ; I said, " What is that ? " " Why, " he said, " that you will pray for me, and tell me where you preach next Sunday. " I told him ; and though it was four miles distance, he was there ; and after that, went ten miles to hear the word frequently.

Preaching one Lord's day in this place, a farmer, from a place called *Ivinghoe Aston*, being present, which place was not far distant, had his passions touched very much by the word, (I believe nothing more)

more) and was with me, as *Herod* with *John* the baptist; *he did many things, and heard him gladly.* This man asked me to come the next Sabbath day, and preach in his barn, accordingly I went; and when I came there, was much surprised at the astonishing ignorance of this man and his whole family; and was quite lost to think what had induced him to ask me to come there to preach. I asked for a Bible, and he had but fifteen or twenty leaves of the word of God in his house, and he said, he never read that. A number of people got together about his barn, and, half an hour after ten, in the forenoon, I began the worship; when the people got round about the door-way, but not above five, or such a number, that dare to enter in; and many would stand behind the rest, and peep over their shoulders at me. I endeavoured to persuade them to come into the barn, and told them, "They might hear better, and that I should do them no harm;" but this was all vain: so I preached unto them as they were; and gave notice, I should preach again in the afternoon, when a great number of people, indeed, were got into the barn, waiting to hear me, and gave very great attention unto the

word

word the Lord. The old man wished me to give notice, that I should preach in his barn that day fortnight, which I did ; but in the course of that time, the people had told him, " He was an old presbyterian ;" and this so vexed the old man, that when I went at the appointed time, he did not care to speak much unto me ; and told me, I could not preach in his barn, for it was filled with corn, it being in the midst of harvest. I told him, there was plenty of room in his house ; but he said, he should not have any preaching about his premises any more. I told him, he ought to have let me know, that I might not have come. I informed him, there was as many, I thought, as two hundred people come together on purpose to hear. He said, " Then if you do preach, you must go into a barn of mine, on the other side of the green, for this time, but you must not any more." Accordingly, the barn was opened, and the people made their way there ; when they were settled, I went from the farm-house, over the green, to this barn, with one man and two poor women, that was all the company I had, and all I knew, among all the people there.

When we were going across the green, about twenty strong servant men followed

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us, and, lifting up their arms above their heads, called on me to look, when they said, they wished their arms might drop from their bodies into hell, if they let me go out of that place alive. The poor women with me were frightened almost into fits, and the man wished me to go back. I said, "No; you may if you choose, but I dare not do that; nor am I in the least afraid." I said, "I am sure God will appear for my safety." Nor was I ever happier, in my mind, in my life: that scripture was precious, indeed, unto my soul, in Nahum, i. 7. *The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him.* Thus, in the strength of the Lord, I went into the barn, and preached from these words, *I have a message from God unto thee.*

When I was preaching, these men came to the barn door, and some of them soon pulled off their hats, when they bid the others do so likewise, but they refused: "Then," said they, "we will knock them off, and your heads with them;" and immediately drew off, and went to fighting. When I had almost ended my sermon, they came again, and attempting to interrupt me; a farmer, I never saw before nor since, as I know of, went and stilled them.

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When worship was over, the people all went out of the barn, and these men, standing in two rows, through which they passed, waited for me. When all the people were gone out, I went between the rows of these men, with my three friends: as I passed along, I said, "I wish you a good afternoon, gentlemen." "The like to you," said some of them. Others of them said, "Damn him, don't let him go; let's smother him in the ditch:" which was close to the farm yard, and a vast quantity of thin mud, newly farmed, lay there. "Take hold of him," said several, "Damn you," said the rest, "do it yourself." With this, they fell to fighting again, and were so engaged, until I got quite away. Thus, the good hand of my God delivered me from those wicked and blood-thirsty men.

After this, I preached for some time at *Northall*, and the word was attended by many people. Many from *Ivinghoe-Aston*, came there to hear; and, at this time my soul was so abundantly blessed with the presence of the adorable Jesus, that I found no higher delight or satisfaction to my mind, than to be preaching of him; nor was I afraid of any consequences that might arise, from introducing his name

into any place, in the preaching of his blessed word.

One Monday, after I had preached at *Northall* on the Sabbath day, as I was returning home, I felt such sweet manifestations of the love of Christ unto my soul, that I was obliged to stop. I was now a little way from *Edlesborough* church, and close by a bank in the open field; here I kneeled down, and called on my best friend, with such liberty and delight, as I never had known before. I now felt a desire to be preaching Jesus continually; and, I do believe, I could have preached as long as I could have found breath to spoke a word.

When I was going on my journey, I frequently looked round, as far as I could see, and wished the Lord would send me to all those places to preach Jesus; and so he did to most of them, after a time. I likewise felt a sweet delight in the promises of my God, and had my mind made exceeding strong. These verses were formed in my mind, as I passed along, without any exercise of study, and there they were kept until I got home, and then I wrote them down.

Soldiers of Christ, press on, press on,
For Christ, your king, the battle 's won ;
 He calls you in his cause to fight :
He arms you with his grace and might,
Though Satan rage, you'll have your right,
 In endless day.

Fear not, through him, you'll win the prize,
And mount with triumph to the skies ;
 Though hellish foes beset you round :
Through Jesu's might you'll tread them down,
And fly, ere long, to wear the crown,
 In endless day.

And when the mighty battle 's fought,
And Christ hath you to glory brought ;
 There in beauteous order class'd :
Conquering souls are ever bless'd,
To sing the riches of his grace,
 In endless day.

I now made my way home, as happy as
I could bear to be, as I thought, from
the powerful impressions, the peculiar visits
of my Saviour's love had made on my
mind : and the whole week was a blessed
season, indeed, with my soul. When I
went out on the following Sabbath to
preach, blessed be my God ! I did not go
a warfare at my own charge ; but found I
was engaged in that, in which I felt my-
self deeply interested ; and found my ac-
counts in the work of my God to my satis-
faction.

A minister of the chapel came to preach at *Alderbury*, one Sabbath morning, that was newly come to the chapel, and had lately left the church of England; when one *Matthew Nail*, a deacon of the baptist church at *Dunstable*, came with a neighbour of his that attended there, having told her he would, some Sabbath day, go and hear her minister.—This man had not, before this time, been from his own church, on a Lord's day, for some years. When he came there, the minister we had, that was so much valued, was gone, and this man was come that Sabbath, for the first; but he was incapable of preaching, and made so poor a piece of work, that Mr. *Nail* was disposed to return home, and not go to the chapel, when a person told him I was to preach, that afternoon, at *Hudnall*, which was nearer his home. Accordingly, he went. I preached from Prov. viii. 17, 18. *I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me: riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness.* He met with an agreeable opportunity, and told his pastor, in the following week, he had heard a boy preach. The minister was so eager to hear me, that he sent for me to come and preach for him, the next Sabbath morning,

morning; I did, and after that, several times. By this minister I was baptised, and became a member of the church at *Dunstable*.

I had now a pair of shoes on, I was afraid would drop from my feet; I had often prayed, that the Lord would make these shoes wear well, for I had no way to get more; and so they did, to astonishment. But at this time, I thought they would not hang on much longer, nor, indeed, did the Lord mean they should; for a person, at this time, gave me money to buy more. This sent me home with comfort and ease of mind, that I could now go about to preach, and should have no need to stop often, to see if my shoes would carry me through the journey. The exercises of my mind about preaching in a pulpit, was, at this time, the same as I more powerfully felt when I went to preach at *Newmill*; I need not state them here, as you will soon come to that circumstance.

On the Monday following, I was at work in a room, where was nothing but bare joists, and a few boards laid to stand upon; when a carpenter came into the room, and said, "So, damn you, you have been at *Dunstable*, a tub-thumping, have you?" and searched all about his bench to find
his

his axe to kill me with ; but he could not find it. He then came and knocked me down ; I returned no blow. He did the same again, and also the third time. I now saw his intention to beat me through the joists, if he could ; and swore, all the time, he would kill me, if he was hanged for it immediately. I now found I must stand in my own defence ; and found my mind easy, that if I only turned again, till I could get away, and not with a design of fighting, I should not be wrong ; and I was obliged to do this immediately, for my life was at stake :—the man afterwards declared, he meant to kill me ; so great was his enmity, he said, because I preached. When I was standing on the summer-piece, the farthest side of the room, I perceived he was making his way to me, in great wrath ; I met him, and struck directly at him, and, I believe, the Lord directed my fist to his throat, as well as *David's* stone to *Goliath's* head. The moment he received the blow, he ran back, along the summer, quite to the window, and looked as black in the face, as if he had been hanging, being hit on the windpipe ; the liquor flew into his throat in that manner, he seemed, for some minutes, as if he must be choaked ; while

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he stood guggling for breath, and staring like a stuck pig, having met with an unexpected salute. I went unto the window and called my father, who came, and held the ladder fast, while I went down, and so got safe from that drunken malicious man.

Soon after this, I was asked to supply at *Newmill* one Sabbath morning. This I did not know, at first, what to think of; I had never before done any thing like building on another man's foundation, and I thought I should not be so happy, as if I was preaching in some place, that might be considered spreading the gospel abroad. Another thing, I did not like the thoughts of going up into a pulpit, I thought I should be too much exalted, for the comfort of my own mind: nor did I know, to the satisfaction of my mind, whether I might not open a door to the grieving of my own soul, and offending my God. At length, I thought, I should not object to speak to the people from the Lord's word, as they must be destitute that morning if I did not, if they would let me stand at the end of the communion table, instead of going into the pulpit. Accordingly, I went; and asked one Mrs. *Grover* (a member of that church) if I must go into the pulpit

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pulpit if I went; she said, "Yes, to be sure; where would you be?" "Why, at the end of the table," I said. She said, their friends would not be happy in that; to cast such a slight upon me, as that would bear the appearance of. She said, "I must send an answer about going, that they might know what to do." I agreed to go; but was tossed about, in my mind, all the time until Sabbath morning, about this going into the pulpit. I thought how strange I should look there in my dress; I thought black was the right colour for such a place: instead of that, I wore a suit of white, a colour, in my present opinion, much more proper to preach in, than black; and had I seen then, as I do now, I should have had no trouble from that circumstance. However, then I wished for a suit of black; but was forced to go and preach without, for that I could not get. I was also much perplexed with the temptation, that Satan brought into my mind (for I can view it as nothing else) to fear, that when I was got into the pulpit, I should be giddy, and tumble over amongst the people. However, at the appointed time, I went, and preached unto the people, and found the Lord was with me, and blessing of me with sweet liberty.

After

After this, I had an invitation from the people at *Littleworth*, who were then destitute of a pastor, to go and preach unto them for a few Sabbaths, which I did; and I found this was from the recommendation of Mr. *Clemons*, who was called from supplying these people, unto the people at *Newmill*. I here received pressing invitations to make some engagements with them; but this I did not do, any farther than to supply them as often as I could, for some time.

About this time, I also received an invitation from the people at *Chineas*, to preach unto them for a few Sabbaths; accordingly, I supplied each as much as I could; and, in each place, the people cleaved unto me in much affection. The people now bestirred themselves at *Littleworth*, and tried to engage me. The people at *Chineas* also wished to engage me there.

I now felt much work for prayer in this case: and found my mind most going out towards the people at *Littleworth*, though *Chineas* was far the most agreeable situation. Here being a very good meeting-house, and a good congregation of people; the other being an interest newly begun, and no meeting-house built. But here the Lord directed me to labour for some time;
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in the course of which, I saw much of the goodness of God, in providence and grace.

I had now fifteen miles to go every week, to preach to these people; and villages I went unto on the Sabbath evenings; one six miles further; and to return on the Monday. At this time, I received little more than what paid my expences for preaching, and attending my journeys, and I was very bare of almost all clothing. I found my mind very much hurt about sleeping from home, my linen being so bad, that made me afraid any one should sleep with me. And I now wanted a dark coloured coat to preach in; for some people seemed hurt that I appeared in such a dress. I went, oftentimes, to a throne of grace on these accounts; and plainly told the Lord, I wanted a shirt to put on, when I went out from home to preach, that was whole; and a dark-coloured coat. I likewise told him the exercises of my mind; and that I thought the people would give better attention unto the word, if I appeared in dark clothes. And the Lord did not seem offended at my simplicity before him, but sent a man, the next time I went, unto me, with money in his hand to buy me a coat; and another, with enough

to

to buy me a shirt. Thus I found the Lord true to that promise he had taught and enabled my soul, many times, to plead before him, in Matt. vi. 33. *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.*

After this, I found, unto my surprise oftentimes, that the Lord was appearing for me, in a way of providence; so that when I was brought to a strait, as I often was, and knew not what to do, I could go, in cheerful hope, unto the throne of mercy; and often found unexpected supplies from some I knew nothing of: indeed, I lived from hand to mouth; and am sure, I never knew so much happiness as I did at these seasons, when I was relying on an arm of providence, day by day, and saw it put forth for my supply. The goodness of my God proved a very happy spring to my devotion, and was the means of enlarging my heart in spreading the glorious gospel; in which work, in all parts, wherever I have preached, I found the apostle's words true; and carried about with me a similar experience to that expressed in Acts, xx. 23. *Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me.*

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While

While with these people, I went to preach at a place called *Hadnum*, where God was pleased to grant us many a gracious visit; and blessed us with the stirrings of his mighty power amongst us. Many were stirred up, also, to oppose the work of God in that place; and, at one time, was determined to prevent me preaching. I was informed, that if I went at the time I had given notice of, that I might expect to meet with a considerable force, under the command of *Belzebub*, prince of hell, that was determined to oppose me.

When the evening came, some friends wished me not to go; but God had clothed me with armour, and I was determined to make trial of it, notwithstanding all my friends could say. When I entered the village, and was passing along the street, I saw about twenty men, whom I understood, were on the watch for me; nor did they watch in vain, for they saw me pass along the street, whom they were watching, and, blessed be God! without a single fear, had there been a thousand of them. When I passed them, they all followed me down to the house where I was to preach; and when I came to the house, there were, I think, forty more, whom the others came and joined: some of the people they were
hindering

hindering from going in, but when I came up to them, they made way for me, without a word. When I was refreshed, I went up stairs, as was usual with me, for the purpose of prayer; when I was there, I looked out of the window, and found the number of my opponents was very much increased, and their spirits seemed to be working up to a very awful pitch. I heard their plan of proceeding laid out amongst them, and my own name mentioned, with dreadful oaths, that they would kill me, and the man that lived in the house. I now found that I had nothing to look for, but an immediate engagement; what I heard, furnished me with matter for prayer, and, when I had done, I went down stairs, with less, I think, than the thousandth part of a grain of faith in my heart, and a little pocket Bible in my hand. Thus, armed for the fight, I entered upon worship, and many, disposed to interrupt, soon came pushing in, but with much difficulty, for the house was as full as it could hold; they soon made their way to the dweller of that house, and blows quickly took place, which I stopped in prayer, and endeavoured to prevent. One of the rabble made his way to the furthest side of the house, amongst some women, and behav-

ing very base, one woman, a gracious person, and possessed of a very stout natural spirit, called for a candle, which was soon given unto her, and putting it quite unto the man's face, he attempted to put his head back, when she followed it with the candle, until the man, from shame, being looked at by every one, and not being able to get out for the crowd, dropped, and crawled away out of doors; the others were got out. But when I was preaching, I verily thought the number that was without, pelting of pieces of building stones at the house, would certainly have beat it in upon us while we were at worship.*

After service was over, it was with much difficulty, the people got out; and, when most of them were out, just as I was getting down from off the stool I stood to preach on, a large stone came through the window, and hit my arm with such force, that I verily thought, at first, had broke it, and which almost beat me down. It was with much difficulty I got off my coat, it was so swelled in an instant; but the next morning was quite well, without any application unto it, and free from the least soreness or stiffness.

Thus the Lord made the wrath of man to praise him; for several admired to find my
arm

arm so well the next morning. Psalm, lxxvi. 10. *and the remainder of wrath he plainly did restrain*; for the next time I went to that place to preach, the very worst of them all came in before any other person, and took a seat just by where I was to stand to preach. The man of the house said, "What! are you come to make another disturbance?" "No," said he, "nor nobody else sha'n't, if it is in my power to prevent it;" and there he kept his seat until I had done: and most of the rabble stood very still all the time, and some said, "You may all say what you will, but that man's a good preacher; I say, he's done it well."

At another village where I preached, I was interrupted by a man, that sat and replied to every sentence almost that I spoke, "That's a lie!" I, at last, was forced to order him out. The man was of some considerable property; but was often, as then, full of liquor; but he was effectually cured of this sort of sport, by being hissed, as he passed the streets, "That's a lie! that's a lie!" And so far, the evil of his doing, returned upon his own head.

After labouring three quarters of a year amongst these people, the pastor of the church at *Dunstable*, who had been for

some time ill, became incapable of preaching, and they gave me an invitation to return home; as the people there could not, at that time, agree to build a place of worship, which afterwards they did, some distance from there, and my friends being destitute at *Dunstable*; I, being a member of that church, and approved of in preaching by them, thought their voice was the call of God unto me, directing my steps where to go. So I obeyed their invitation, and came unto them as soon as my engagements were all up with the people at *Littleworth*. When I was, for the last time, to preach amongst the people there, I shall never forget my feelings, nor what I saw of theirs. I well knew that there were many there that loved me from their very hearts; and I am sure they lay near mine: for the remembrance of many of them is sweet unto me to this day; and, I believe, will as long as I live.

When I had preached my farewell sermon, and was about to depart from amongst them, it was affecting indeed. Some hanging on one arm, and some on the other, with their lips quivering, like the lips of babes; and tears running down the faces of many men and women, as fast as they could trickle. Others hanging on the

the pales, and looking as if they were fainting; and some, when I gave my hand to them, attempted to shake hands with me, when their hands dropped to their bodies, as if they had lost the use of them. Others, when attempting to wish me farewell, burst into tears, and could not speak a word; while I felt as if some one was tearing and rending me a-part. And I have begged of the Lord, at times, ever since, that I might never be called from a people any more, in the midst of affection and love on both sides. But this tearing and rending a-part, was for you, O ye church of Christ at *Dunstable*! and surely it demands the exercise of your strongest love, and greatest care, towards him, whom God took from a people loth to part with him, and that love him unto this day, to give him unto you; and be concerned to live a life of prayer, that this gift of God unto you may be for good, unto his end; and that you may have to bless God for it, to all eternity.

I now entered upon stated labours amongst the people at *Dunstable*, and can safely say, without an eye unto filthy lucre: for at this time their pastor lay in a deep decline, and soon died after I came. I could not be willing to take any part of his support, although

although he wished it. The people were poor and could do but little for me, indeed, not enough to buy me bread, while their pastor was ill; nevertheless, I did not think as some ministers have said—that the first thing to be thought of amongst a people is, what they can raise for the minister's support. I believe such men were never sent of God, and their principal concern being about money, shews they are a near kin unto Judas, who loved the bag more than Jesus; and related unto Dæmas, who forsook Paul for worldly gain. But ministers of Jesus, sent of God, need not be afraid of support, for God will provide; as I shall hereafter make plain.

What I at this time received, was so trifling, that the deacon said, he was ashamed to offer it to me; but, trifling as it was, the Lord kept me from finding fault, or making complaint. When the minister was dead, I never enquired about what they could do, nor should not have known, if one of the deacon's had not told me: the whole, however, was much less than what I might have had in two or three places, had that been my object: but, blessed be God! it was not, nor is it to this day.

I have had several ministers call at my house, that are so called, that have been enquiring

enquiring after a people destitute of a pastor, or (in other words) looking out for a shop to offer their wares in; instead of waiting until God sent for them, and then going at his bidding, without asking any questions, for conscience sake. For when I have said, there was a people destitute in such a place; the answer was—do you know what they can raise? I said, no. I sha'n't like to go, unless they can raise fifty or sixty pounds a year, said they. I thought, if I was a member of a church, where such a man came, I should rather give him something to keep away, than to be plagued with him. I found my concern of mind to be—how to do the best for the cause, and to give my accounts unto the Lord with joy. I found a sweet recompence in the work itself, and a real happiness that God had sent me to serve a poor people, and given me a heart so to do.

In the course of the time I preached, before my settlement with the church, I lived at *Alderbury*, and came every week seven miles, all weathers, to serve them: in which time, I visited my dell, on the side of the hill, frequently; and found many sweet seasons of enjoyment with my God there. Afterwards, I took to my
room

room, for the purpose of searching the word of God; nor would I read any other book, that I might be able to come to my people in the light of truth, and feed them with the bread of life: and not like some ministers, now a-days, in our parts, who have little to bring before starving souls, but a dish of dead men's brains, in a dish, decorated with the evergreens of error. I never left my room but on a Saturday, for some considerable time together; but in the evening, on a Saturday, I used myself to take a walk up the hill. One day, having been thinking about faith, when I was going up the hill, this temptation came into my mind, to try the truth of that scripture, in a very unjustifiable way, in Matt. xvii. 20. *If ye have faith, as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove.* When I got to the top of the hill, I stretched forth my arm, and, pointing to the hill, said, "Begone into yonder plain." But finding it did not obey me, I began to scruple the truth of God's word; and where my mind would have been led unto, I know not, had I been left unto its exercises then. But I began to think thus: Did I really believe when I spoke, that the hills would remove?
and

and, if I spoke to them again in like manner, could I really believe they would remove? I thought I could not; and therefore made it up in my mind, not to say any more unto the hills, of that sort, until I found I could believe in that way; which never concerned me afterwards.

One day, when I was in my room, I found my mind very much led out in meditation about heaven; after musing for some time, I took a pen, and began to write an hymn on heaven; while writing, I found myself, in a particular manner, engaged with a pleasing prospect, as I thought, before my eyes: I was soon carried quite away, so as to be incapable of stirring hand or foot: my head was lolled back in the chair, and my eyes wide open, but seemingly fixed, with my pen in my hand. While in this posture, my mother came up stairs; after stirring about there for some time, she came to me, and, moving my head, said, "What do you sit so for?" When my mind seemed to leave its delightful object, and I began to stir. I found myself so happy, that I could only wish that she was the same, and wished I had not been disturbed. At this time, I was perfectly well, and, not in the least drowsy; therefore, my reader cannot shift

shift of my pleasant entertainment, with the idea of some defect in nature, as to her performing her proper functions at that time, and so leaving me to fancy.

I was now frequently blessed with the sweet enjoyment of the Lord's favour, and delightful manifestations of his love, in my private walks with my God; and very often, I thought, the Lord had placed me on the very borders of the land of *Beulah*, and within sight of the world of glory. Oftentimes, when I entered my room to go to rest, such delightful entertainments solaced my soul, as kept me awake most part of the night. I now, very frequently, wished for the time of my exit to come, and thought the weeks, days, hours, and even minutes, all long, that kept me from my adorable Jesus; and gladly could I have resigned my breath, at any time, without a wish to stay longer on any account, excepting the church of God; and here, I must confess, I found my mind *in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better. But, being persuaded for me, to abide in the flesh was more needful for the church at that time.* Phil. i. 23, 24. And, I can safely say, from a clear and sound conscience, that so great was my care for the church

church of God, gave unto me as my own, at that time, even at the first; that I really was willing to stay from the kingdom of heaven, for a time, to serve the church. Notwithstanding, if I had died at that time, I should have met death with pleasure, and have died without a fear of possessing immortal glory. If any should say, "I don't believe you could feel so, or any one else." I wish them to notice, in the verses I have just before referred to, the mind and state of Paul; which which was exactly the same as mine at this time.

I soon found when I was engaged with the people at *Dunstable*, that God had sent me; and this was made plain to my mind, beyond a doubt: nor have I ever been doubtful of it unto this day, nor, do I believe, I ever shall. I enjoyed sweet liberty in my work, and abundant feelings in my soul, of a very desirable kind; and the Lord blessed the word abundantly, so that I seldom preached a sermon without some manifest evidence of its being blessed. Nor have I ever preached many times without seeing this, up to the present day, in which I write these lines. The church began to increase, and a pleasing appearance of things opened unto the people,

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while

while the Almighty Jesus was pleased to make bare his arm amongst us. In a very little time I had many to look unto, that to this day, are living seals of my ministry, and witnesses of its being of, and from the Lord.

After having preached some time successfully amongst the people, they proposed to me a settlement with them. This I agreed unto, from a conviction that it was by the providential appointment of the everlasting God: but no one can think what exercises of mind I felt, when this was done, and I, as they called it, ordained their pastor; though I doubt not but I was, and should have been so, as from God, had that ceremony never been attended unto at all. I felt my mind perplexed about the sheep of Jesus's fold; and when I found the Redeemer had left them with me, for a season, in the wilderness, my great concern was to do rightly by them, knowing that Christ would retaliate every injury done unto his sheep, by any that dare to hurt them in all his holy mountain. The words of Solomon, in 2 Chron. i. 10. *Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people;* I made matter of prayer for a long time, and I trust I can safely say, whenever I found

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any thing contrary unto my desire or prayer, in any thing amongst the people, it hath always been a grief unto my soul, and put me upon repeating that request again and again unto the Lord. My desire was to have heavenly skill; rightly to divide the word amongst the people, to give unto every one their portion in due season, and to be able to feed the sheep and not the goats; and, in my ministry, rightly to distinguish betwixt the precious and the vile, and not jumble all together; nor ever be left to encourage the hypocrite's hope, or the worldling's profession; nor err in laying the pleasant lines before the children of Zion.

Soon after I was settled, there was one person, not a member of the church, but doing something for the cause, and liked to be thought something of note, told me, that I must come immediately and live at *Dunstable*. I said, I could get no house; then I must get a bit of one, the person said; looking very red and mad in the face, while speaking. I said, that would not do; for my wife was very far gone with child, and to remove from a comfortable home, in winter time, and be put to shifts, in such a situation, would be very distressing. But this person of consequence

quence said, with an air, " If you don't come, your settling with the people will be looked upon as a manœuvre." This very much hurt my mind : for I well knew I had no design of deceiving any one ; and it would have been well for that person, if there had been as much of a fair and honest spirit as I possessed. However, I said, I would come to *Dunstable*, as soon as my wife was released of her burthen, and was able to come : and I pleaded the unhappiness that must attend a woman's mind, to be removed, at such a time, amongst strangers, and to leave the doctor she had spoke to, and be obliged to fall into the hands of one she knew nothing of. These, I thought, were all-sufficient pleas and circumstances, that were sufficient to justify me in not removing immediately ; nor did I think it was much like the spirit of the gospel in that person, to wish it. If I had known as much then as I do now, of such lordly dispositions, I should have paid no attention to what was said by such a person ; unless to have levelled several parts of the word of God against such a spirit. There was, however, craft as well as ugliness in this person's conduct towards me ; for after all I could say, this was my answer : " If you do not come, until your
wife

wife has been a-bed and up again, and capable of coming, you may stay away quite; for the people will care nothing about you, when you do come." I thought this was strange encouragement for a newly-settled minister, and but cold comfort; it made me almost ready to wish I had not settled with the people at that time. But this was a wish the conduct of the people had made no way for; for when I came to hear what they said, I found they knew nothing of the matter; and that it was not their desire, nor did they wish me to have removed at all, if I did not choose myself. But I, supposing the people to have been consulted by this person, thought I would not hurt their minds, and so agreed to come to *Dunstable*, amidst every inconvenience.

A little den was got for me, not half so good as some pig-sties; and when we came, we were obliged to lodge at a friend's house (a farmer) in *Dunstable*, until this place was put into a state of order for us to go to it.

One evening, while lodging at this friend's house, I verily thought my wife was taken in labour, and, I believe, so did my friend likewise. I now found work for my mind; I thought how unpleasant

this would be, and, very probably, might cause some uncomfortableness afterwards : but it was not as it was expected to be.

When we came to dwell in our little cot, we found it so wet and damp, as to render it dangerous unto our healths ; and were laid under the necessity of removing from it, as soon as an opportunity offered, which ere long did.

I now took a house at a large rent, which I was obliged, from circumstances, to do ; and found my mind exceedingly perplexed about the state and condition I was now in. I had a few people, a little support, the expence of removing to *Dunstable*, and then of removing, in a little time, into another house, with a lying-in just at hand ; and a rent to pay, that would take what I had to support my family with for a quarter of a year. The dread of being unable to pay my way, was continually with me, night and day, and often prevented my taking that rest, which nature required ; and which I often made matter for prayer, as I lay in my bed. I endeavoured to shew a cheerful countenance, though, at the same time, I had a sorrowful heart.

At this time, *my heart knew its own bitterness, and a stranger could not intermeddle with*

with its joys; as I shall soon shew. Prov. xiv. 10. I had not prayed in this circumstance many days, before the hand of my God was, in providence, put forth unto me for good.

One forenoon, I heard my wife talking with her mother, who lived with us, about what we must get for dinner; I expected I should soon be asked for money, and having no more, than what, I thought, was quite necessary for me to keep against the time of my wife's lying-in, made me tremble and sweat; and so I went up stairs, and cast myself on the floor before the Lord. After I had been praying about a quarter of an hour, I heard somebody rap at the door; my wife not hearing, I came down stairs, and opened the door, and found there a boy, on a horse, with a large basket of meat, enough to keep us for a week. He said, his master sent him with that for me; and bid him make haste with it to my house, that I might have it by dinner time. I received this favour, and, with much difficulty, carried it into the house; being struck with the goodness of God, with more than this mercy: for that sweet scripture, the Lord gave me along with the basket of meat, in Zach. xiii. 9. *They shall call on my name, and I will*

will hear them : I will say, It is my people ; and they shall say, The Lord is my God. I was enabled to view him in covenant relation unto my soul ; and, with inexpressible satisfaction, I went up stairs, and fell before him, to bless him for his twofold acts of kindness unto worthless me.

At this time, I was aware, I should have frequent need to be often with the Lord, in prayer ; and found a desire in my mind, that the Lord would give me encouragement to call upon him, and faith to trust him in every time of need : and my heavenly friend granted unto me that scripture, which, unto this day, has often been sweet delight and satisfaction unto my mind, in 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. *Although my house be not so with God ; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure ; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire.*

I now found my mind made easy ; and thought, if it was not the will of the Lord to grant me more than what was necessary, from hand to mouth, if he would let me enjoy him, as my covenant God, and place me at his feet, as his covenant child, I should be blessed indeed. I was now directed to pray for faith more than I ever was ; and was highly delighted with living
upon

upon providence, by faith and prayer, which, the Lord knows, I, for a long time, have.

About the time the before-mentioned meat was nearly gone, I felt my mind much going out unto the Lord, in prayer, that I might be favoured with some promises from his word, to direct me in prayer and faith ; and that scripture was granted unto me, in Psalm l. 15. *And call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.*

When our present supply was gone, I went up stairs, and prayed unto the Lord. I asked him to supply our wants, with either provision or money, and pleaded his promise of answering in time of trouble. When I had done prayer, and was come down stairs ; my wife said, “ You must give me some money, master, to get something for dinner.” This was a hard task to be performed by a man who had got none, my reader must acknowledge. However, I was quite easy about the matter ; I said, “ You must wait a little while, and then I’ll see about it.” I then made my way into the kitchen, and, looking at the rain through the window (for it was as wet a day as I ever saw) wondered, within myself, which way my supply was to come,
for

for I was fully persuaded there would be something, in some way or other. I was now waiting to receive what my gracious benefactor might see proper to send me. While I was standing in expectation of receiving the Lord's favour, somebody rapped at the door; I immediately went to the door, in full expectation of receiving something, and had it not been so, I should have been amazingly disappointed indeed: but the God, I waited on, never leaves the expectation he raises in the hearts of his people to perish: I found at the door a lad, on horseback, and, I think, wet to the skin, with a basket of meat. I said, "You have had a wet journey, my lad." He said, "Yes; my master said I should come, or else I wa'n't very willing; I said, I'd come when the wet was a little over; but my master said, I should set out directly." I smiled, and took the basket, and said, "You are just in right time, my lad:" for I was at no loss to tell what made his master in such a hurry, nor what caused him to send the boy through the rain. This raised my faith and expectation more in the Lord than ever. I now found it safe living by faith and prayer, dependant on the merciful providence of a covenant God; and proved that scripture

true,

true, by blessed experience, in Isaiah, lxx. 24. *And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.* After this, the Lord did so appear in sending suitable supplies, that I had little use for money for some time; and, indeed, but little money to use; for the Lord would not allow me one single penny for a long time, that I had not immediate call for; but I had enough to provide firing and pay for bread, and get a few needful things; and, thank the Lord! to pay my rent; which had been such a burthen upon my mind.

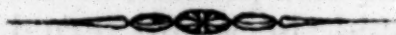
I now enjoyed a sweet intimacy with my Lord, and, blessed be his name! such a satisfaction in calling on him in every strait, that I carried almost every thing, attending me, unto him, at a throne of grace.

I was at this time in very great need of a great coat, to go out to preach in; and being one day going out when the weather was exceeding cold; as I was passing along, I found my mind impressed with a desire to call upon the Lord; accordingly, I did; and asked for a coat, or money to buy me one: before I came from *Market Street*, the place I went unto, a person said, "You should have put on your great coat

coat this cold weather." I said, " I must stay until I have one, before I wear it." A person of property standing by, and hearing this, as I passed along the street, put a guinea into my hand, and told me, to put it to what use I thought proper. I went to a shop directly and bought me cloth for a coat, and came trudging home with it; wondering, all the way, at my Saviour's care of me, and feeling some sweet exercises of gratitude in my heart unto my God. But, when I had got this, I wanted his kind assistance to get it made: for this I ventured to pray; and, a person, I little thought of, gave me half-a-guinea. Thus I got my coat.—And several times, after this, the Lord sent me money at such times as I stood in real need of it: nor did he ever leave me without supplies: often when I have been at such a stand as not to know what to do, I have heard somebody rap at the door, and when I have opened it to them, have received a guinea, from such persons as I did not know knew any thing of me; and sometimes, from quarters I knew not where, but, I was well satisfied whose hand was in it; and often found that scripture endeared unto me, by these favours of the Lord, in Isaiah, xxxiii. 16. *He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall*

shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. Nor have I ever found a single promise to fail me, on which the Lord caused me to hope.

How great Jehovah's bounties are,
To them that seek his face;
Kindly he waits to answer prayer,
With blessings of his grace.



CHAP. VI.

AFTER these things, providence called me, in the following summer, to preach at a place called *Studham*; where I had, in former times, preached in a house: but the influence of two or three church parsons, and the effects of some of the more topping people, hindered those well-disposed persons, who had opened their houses for the preaching of the gospel, by threatening to turn them out; and, at that

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time,

time, had given them notice to go out of their houses. I before had two houses to preach in at this place; one at one end of the common, and the other at the other end: it being a long scattering place, rendered it more convenient. But now, receiving an invitation, by one of the friends, to come and preach on a Sabbath evening; I fixed the time, and went. When I came there, I found the landlord had been with my friend, and informed him, that I should not preach in the house; if I did, he said, he would turn him out immediately, and out of his work also. I found a great number of people assembled together, who were very solicitous for my preaching; accordingly, I agreed to preach out of doors: but I was informed by some present, that they were very unhappy about me; for there were a number of men at the publick house, that were designed on purpose to interrupt and abuse me. But this had very little effect on my mind, for I was well assured, God would protect me.

I had fresh on my mind, at this time, a circumstance that had not long before taken place.—Coming one Sabbath morning, from *Alderbury* to *Dunstable*, (a little before I came to *Dunstable* to live) I met a man in a narrow lane, with a club in his hand.

hand. This man, I afterwards found from one of his own companions, had been waiting about that spot, for my passing, from the time it was light in the morning. He thus accosted me, "Damn you, do you know what our parson preached about last Sunday?" "No," said I; "how should I know, when I was not there?—who is your parson?" said I. "Who?" said the man, "why, *Bingham*; and a damn'd good one he is too: he preached against you," said the man: "and plainly shewed, that such men were the false prophets; and also, that the end of the world was just at hand; and also, that he had two thousand pounds laid out upon him for learning, and, therefore, must be better able to teach the people, than such an ignorant fellow as you." I said, I thought the money was badly laid out; for, after all, he could not preach five minutes, without every word being written down. He then made his way towards me, but I, being on horseback, rode by him; when I heard him say, he would be damn'd if he did not soon stop my preaching, by night or by day.

A fortnight after this, I was returning from *Dunstable*, after the afternoon service, to *Alderbury*, to preach that evening. When I came to *Alderbury*, I rode into a

pond, in that village, to wash my horse ; just by was a publick house, and this same man was sitting at the publick house door ; and the very next house unto the publick house, was the place where I preached. At this place I had a great many hearers ; and this man had been sitting for some time, I afterwards understood, swearing and damning about the number of people that were going to meeting, As soon as he saw me, he called unto me and said, he had been waiting for me a long time, and that he could not go out of the village without putting a stop to my preaching ; and called aloud for damnation upon his soul, if he did not destroy me before the meeting was over. When I rode out of the pond, the tears ran a-pace from my eyes, on account of this man ; it was impressed in an instant on my mind, that he had asked for what he would soon have ; and I seemed quite sure, he would not be long before he was in hell. While I was engaged in preaching, the landlord and he fell out, and fought in the house ; in a little time, the landlord beat him headlong down the cellar stairs ; and, when the meeting was over, I was informed, this man was lying in the publick house, with his skull split, quite across his head, and in
a little

a little time, he died. *Thus was the Lord's bow made quite naked.* Habak. iii. 9.

This was much on my mind, when I got upon a table, on *Studham* common, to preach: and fortified my mind against the fear of what man could do unto me. When I was preaching, the hell-inspired numbers came forth against me unto battle, upon *Studham* common; and when they were come quite up to the people, standing around me to hear the Lord's word, their manner of proceeding put many to fear, and plainly indicated to me what was their design; when these words, while I stood preaching, came with much power into my mind, in Rom. viii. 31. *If God be for us, who can be against us?*" I expected I should soon see the hand of God put forth for good, and so I did; for some of them said, "Let us hear him a little while," which they did; and then some of them began to interrupt, and wished the others to do the same; when some, whom they expected to have been the worst, and whom they had stimulated with liquor for that purpose, turned against them, and their contest grew very severe; at length blows took place; and with words and blows they were employed, while I attended to my work, and preached my sermon out.

When I had done, I mounted my horse, and rode home. As I passed by them, (stripped and a fighting) some of them told me, they were fighting for me: the two, then engaged, stopped, and one of them said, "God bless you, Sir! I'll fight for you till I die." Thus I left them, and rode home on my friend's horse, with this portion in my heart and mind, Rom. viii. 37. *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us."*

That night I went to rest, with my soul as full of the consolations of the Lord, as it could hold. About twelve o'clock, my wife awoke me, and wished me to get up, it being a very dreadful tempest, which I did; and found every flash of lightening, and clap of thunder, a very sweet entertainment unto my mind. I thought, with pleasure, on two lines, that, I doubt not, the Lord made sweet unto me at that time:

His light'nings flash, his thunders roll,
How welcome to the faithful soul.

For some time, I now enjoyed sweet entertainment from the presence of my Lord, which made me think something of a trying nature was approaching towards me; for I never have known a time yet, in which

which the Lord has favoured me with more than usual faith, or hope, or comfort, but he has soon put those graces unto the trial; and so I found it here. I was soon let to know I must leave my house, and at this time, I did not know where to get another. My wife now cast many reflections upon me, as if I could help any thing; but I, seeing she did not know how to trust God in that case, nor pity me, thought I would pay no attention unto what she said, but lay my case before the Lord.

After a time, there was one house fitting up in the town to be let; I got the promise of having the refusal of it. When the time came for me to give the man an answer, I was obliged to agree unto his terms, as there was no other house to be got; he, knowing that, would not let me the house under eight guineas a-year, though it was not worth more than four. I agreed to give this, and went home and told my wife; and she did nothing but trouble my mind. She said, we should be ruined, and the rent could never be paid, and we must go without food or clothing; and wished she had been a shoe-blacker's wife, instead of a minister's: and I thought, though I said nothing, it would have been as well, if that was all the encouragement I was to have from

from her, in time of trouble: as to wanting food, I was quite easy about, and, I thought, if she wanted clothing, she must go and ask God for them, as I had for mine. I was concerned about the rent myself, but concluded to make it matter of prayer, which the Lord enabled me to do.

Some time after we had removed to this house, my wife miscarried, and her mother told me, she wanted some money, for several things were wanted; I said, I would give her some presently; and when I had so said, I found my mind much perplexed, not knowing which way it was to come, as I had not a shilling in the world. I went up stairs, and made it matter of prayer; when I came down, my wife's mother was coming towards me, I thought, for some money, which very much confused me; but, at that instant, somebody rapped at the door, I went, and found a person sent with some money, open in the hand, to give me.

After this, I was put to very great straits, and could not tell what to do, for a little money, to supply my wife in what she wanted (she said) to keep house with. She often talked, so as to try my mind very much, about her miserable fortune in coming to *Dunstable*, and to lie at the mercy
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of those poor people, in what they chose to give. I thought, if she knew from whence good part of her support came, as I did, and felt as I felt about it, she would have spoke different. However, her muttering often sent me to a throne of grace ; and I can say, she was supported for a long time, in great part, with God's answers unto my prayers. Upon that she lived, though she knew it not ; and I often used to think, if she had nothing to supply her wants with, but what she so got, she would have been starved to death ; for I never saw that she had any idea of living by prayer and providence.

One time being in great straits, and having prayed several times, I thought my case was more trying than usual, as I had received no answer unto my prayers. At length it came to the point—money I must have, or else go quite away ; for it was due, and wanted, and must be paid ; and complaint for it was made at home also. I went up stairs, and, with more than usual earnestness, called upon the Lord, and stated my circumstances unto him. When I had done, I came down stairs, and sat in a most confused manner ; when a dear valuable man, a bright Christian, came to see me, and, after talking a little while, he
said,

said, "Have you no garden?" I said, "Yes." "Let us take a walk in it," said he: and when we had got there, he put three guineas into my hand, which, he said, he and a friend or two had been putting together for me: when he had given me this, he said, "The Lord bless you!" and went his way. Thus I found the Lord's delay, was only to come with greater kindness; and brought that scripture sweetly unto my mind, in Psalm, xxvii. 14. *Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.*

At this time I was much engaged in preaching, and with very great success; and in this work I frequently found very particular exercises of mind. I found great need to be much with God in prayer, that pride might not arise; while I plainly saw, that almost every sermon I preached was owned and blessed of the Lord. I, for the most part, was favoured with liberty in a comfortable manner; and, being one Sabbath day so blessed, in a very great degree, I found a spirit rise in me, leading me to think very highly of my sermon; and I thought to be sure, the people must have heard very much to their satisfaction. But though I had seldom preached before with-

out

out finding the word much blessed, yet now I was left without any proof of its being owned of the Lord, or blessed by him to any one: and for this rising pride of mine, the Lord tried me in the following manner:—The next Lord's day I found a very great difficulty in preaching, so that I could scarce tell how to keep on; I stood, and coloured and trembled, and wished I was absent, or that there was a way I could make my escape from before the people. When I had done, I sat down in the pulpit, and hid my face; after concluding in prayer, I crept away into the vestry, hoping no one would be there to speak unto me, and taking my hat, I was going home with this exercise of mind—that the Lord had left me, and I should be of no further use in preaching. As I was going from the vestry, a person met me, and came and took hold of my hand, and thanked me for my sermon; saying, under God, they had found it of great use. This I could not believe; and verily thought I must have said, “I think that's a lie.” I felt my spirit rise within, and went away angry, thinking that person had been sporting with my feelings; and thought, it was too bad for any one to attempt to wound, where God had already wounded. But this, I found,

was

was the produce of my confused mind, and not the design of my well-meaning friend, to whom that sermon was really blessed.

I thought, at the close of that Sabbath, I would take care, against another, not to be so shackled in preaching. Accordingly, I began on the Monday, to search for a text; and finding a passage, I thought, would do, I closely studied it all the week. When Saturday morning came, I thought I would call over, in my mind, the thoughts I had on that scripture, which I did, and concluded, in my mind, it would do for the whole day. This, my reader will observe, was the work of a creature, in his own strength: but now observe the work of God. In the afternoon, I found a great many of my ideas were gone from my mind; towards the evening, I had lost them all, and could see no more in that scripture than in a marble stone. At length, I lost the text itself; nor could I recollect a single word that was in it; nor yet what part of scripture it was in, what chapter, or what verse: nor do I think I should have known it, at that time, if I had read it. I went up stairs, and cast myself flat on the floor, and, with strong cries and tears, called on the Lord. However, the Lord saw good, that night to put me to bed in
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the dark, without any text or sermon. I lay and concluded, in my mind, that God had given me up, and would make no further use of me : had it been in my power to have died, I should ; for I had no desire to live, if I was not of service unto Zion. I concluded, when it was morning, I would go away, for I knew the people would get me into the pulpit if they could find me ; and, I seemed quite sure, the Lord would not suffer me to speak. I thought on the Monday, I would remove my family, and go quite out of the way : dropping into a sleep. At length, I awoke, just as the sun was rising, and found my mind full of horror and such dreadful darkness, that I tried to think of some part of scripture, but could find none ; nor even form an idea of what was in the word of God, any more than of a book I never saw. Rising up in my bed, with a full purpose to dress myself, and go away ; in an instant, that word came into my mind, *victory*, and with such power and proof too, I scarce ever knew. The light that God sent with it, was exceeding and abundant, so that I was almost incapable of supporting myself under it. I dressed myself, and went to my Bible ; I found the word, and was enabled to thank my God for it, and, with much concern,

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cern, to pray, that I might not lose that word, nor the light, I was blessed with, from it. I felt a soul-desire to go to the house of the Lord, wholly dependant upon him; and the Lord permitted me so to do. He gave me such divine delight in meditating on that word, that I longed for the time to go to the house of God. When I went, I preached from the word, *victory*, and the Lord blessed it to two souls, who were soon afterwards received into the church. Thus God stripped me to clothe me; he emptied me to fill me; he made me a fool, that I might become wise, and win souls. Prov. xi. 30. *He that winneth souls is wise.*

At this time, I kept up a lecture at *Market Street*, which was so well attended, that the meeting-house, oftentimes, could not contain the people: this was always the case while I had the lecture: and the good old man, who kept the doors open, was better attended. When I had got a good lecture, another minister was brought forth to take a part: and soon this circumstance took place. The people asked which night I came; and then the meeting was full of people: but not so when the other preached: upon which account, some seemed angry, and spoke exceeding cross to me; though

though I could not make the people go or stay away. I observed the other preacher never came near until I was blessed unto some, who joined my church; and then, as some of the people told me, they could plainly see, it was to pick up the fruits of my labour: very lately, I heard some of them say, when I had the lecture alone, the place flourished; but, when I was interrupted, it soon decayed, and now is fallen almost to nothing. I knew another place, where I was blessed very much in preaching, to many souls; and some other minister was introduced, after a time. I scarce ever preached, but the word was manifestly owned. The other preached, and no such thing appeared. However, another minister drew away the souls, who are told by their own consciences, that they ought to have been in my church: they have since told me so; and declared, with tears in their eyes, they have never been so happy as when I preached amongst them: this was told me very lately. For my part, I never could push in where another man was labouring, though others have done so by me: but I have never seen them blessed in so doing, nor the people either; nor do I believe any one ever will. My friend Paul had the same

mind and spirit as myself, in this, expressed in Rom. xv. 20. *Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation.*

I had a little school at this time, but this I found very interrupting to my mind. I was led to pray for some time to the Lord, that he would put me into some way of business, that I might attend to, and not find hurt unto my mind in the ministry. I had a considerable insight into the use of medicine, and with a natural capacity for this, the Lord sent me into the world : but I dare not enter upon this, until I had made it matter of prayer, and entreated the Lord to direct and bless me in it ; and this I was frequently with him for. Many scriptures opened unto my mind, in the conduct of Christ, and his apostles, in healing diseases ; and I was made to believe, that faith in the same name as *Peter* and *John* did good by to the body, would render me useful unto the bodies of my fellow creatures, as well as their souls, Acts, iv. Therefore I set about preparing some drugs, and soon entered upon practice. My wife was much hurt about this, for some time ; and told me, I was going to ruin her and myself too, in meddling with

with a thing I knew nothing about. But, I thought, I knew much better than she could tell me; and, considering she talked as one of the simple women, I thought, I should not regard what she said. My concern was how to proceed; I wished to do much good, at as reasonable a rate, as I could; so as to get a little benefit by it, and help my fellow creatures. At the same time, I was enabled to go to God for direction, whenever I made a medicine, and also to ask his blessing upon it; and ever since, unto this day, I have found my business to lead my mind much unto the Lord, and have enjoyed it as sanctified unto me, and have seen it to be so unto many, in a striking light, of my patients. Nor do I any more doubt, but God made me a doctor, than I doubt he made me a minister; and I can prove it as plain, which I shall do: for many envy me in it, because God has made it a help unto me, and my poor despised church also.

When I first began, every case I took in hand I was blessed in, and had every encouragement to persevere; but I knew not how, for want of money, to buy drugs; I therefore went unto the Lord, and asked him, if my present proceedings were agreeable to him, to provide some money for

me, to get me some drugs ; and if it was not, to let me know it. A few days after this, I went out from home, and calling upon a Christian friend, a man of property, he said, " So, I understand you have some notion of doctoring." " Yes," I said, " Well," said he, " you seem likely to be useful too, and it is impressed on my mind, it is of God ; you have a poor church, but you wish to serve it, I well know, and the Lord has appointed this, that you may be able to live and serve your people." He then said, " You will find some difficulty attending you, for some time, I suppose, in getting drugs, but be not afraid, it is of God, and he will provide." With that, he put four guineas into my hand, and said, " Be sure you buy drugs with that, and thank God for it ; for he led my mind to give it, before you called, and has sent you to receive it, I make no doubt, at a very proper time." He moreover said, " I shall help you as often as I think you really need help," and so he did : and my faithful God always directed him so exactly, that it was as if he had been always with me, to know my affairs. Now let any one say, if they can, the hand of God was not in this undertaking, without telling a lie. I laid out this money in drugs,
and

and the Lord quickly found me business to put them into use, which I did, and to good effect.

At this time, I removed into the house I am now living in, and soon opened a shop. When some people saw the drugs, they said, they would stand there until they were all spoiled, before any one would call upon me to use any of them. But they soon found themselves mistaken; my business increased rapidly, and great success attended me in it: so that some professors, who, I knew, were mad enough to see me prosper (of a neighbouring church) and had said enough to let it be known; they hoped it would do me no good; but at length they said—they must own the Lord had made me very prosperous in my business:—they might have said, to their grief and sad disappointment.

One *Aslin*, a man, then a member of my church, but soon after excluded, being made very awkward towards me, I know, by the false and foolish cant of some; amongst other things, told me, with a sneer, my business was a very wrong thing, and it would never do me any good; and he supposed, he said (unto another person) he must take my drugs off, or else I must throw them into the street. But, you will observe,

observe, reader, this man and some others, were only afraid of my not being kept wholly dependant upon the people, and thought they should not be able to confine my jaws, from speaking that which their consciences could not bear to hear; for this man kept shop on a Sabbath day, and a fine fellow he was to fall so foul upon a poor minister of Jesus Christ, for only doing a little that God had directed him unto, for the good of his family; and preaching more, at the same time, than any minister round about; while this creature was standing behind his counter, the forepart of the Lord's day, and only at the house of God in the afternoon. But what he said to me, the Lord has proved him a liar in, respecting my business; for it has done me good and great good; and there's enough to shew to him, that his judgment of me in that was not of God. As also, in saying I should be but a very little while at *Dunstable*, he meant, he hoped I should not be there long, to preach against shop-keeping on a Lord's day. But that is long since, and I am there still, and there like to be: thus he lied, and I had that scripture made good unto me, Deut. xxxiii. 29. *And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high*

high places. And I never knew any one speak against my business, that could assign any reason why they did, that was scriptural, or worth regarding, in what they said.

A little time back, one Mr. *Chew* told me it was wrong, and a man that preached should have no business; and if I had none, I might come and see him oftner. But that would not pay my debts, nor keep my family, nor be of any service unto my church, I well knew. Some friends of mine told me, he had been endeavouring to make them think it was wrong; and if they could think that, to be sure they would not employ me: but let any one prove it so, if they can. This man soon after began to preach, and I heard him complain of so much worldly cumber; however, want did not lead to more business. But soon after he had found fault of my little needful business; amidst his abundance of business; he was one day at my house, and enquired after some people that worked straw, to get to *Leighton*, for he had a mind to try what he could do at that—a business more cumbersome than all his other. This, I thought, was very contrary to his advice to me, and I told him so; and made what he said about my business
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of no weight on my mind ; nor indeed, would all the sayings in the world, because I knew it to be of God.

When I had got my shop, it, for some time, kept me very short of money, to get that furnished ; and, at this time, my wife lying-in, and was obliged to have two doctors, whom I paid three guineas and a half to. This provided work for me in prayer, and they being answered. Persons, at this time, I little expected favour from, gave me a guinea ; and I received a guinea in a letter at this time, with, " Sir, I have sent you this." My business also was of use in this circumstance, for I was enabled, under God, to set up my wife : and the medicine I gave her, would have come to a ten pound bill, had a doctor attended her. By this means, I escaped that circumstance ; and, after a long expensive season, through the mercy of my God, was free from insolvency. Thus goodness and mercy followed me, to the glory of my God.

Jehovah's boundless love,
 Demands a grateful song ;
 Unchangeable it moves
 Eternity along :
 Stands like the Lord, for ever sure,
 And will, when time shall be no more.

CHAP. VII.

HAVING been blessed with such an experience of the Almighty's goodness, both in providence and grace, I found very great satisfaction in reading the accounts *William Huntington* gives, in his *Bank of Faith*, which about this time, fell into my hands. And since I have heard that blessed man of God preach, one sermon in particular, at *Monkwell-street* chapel, the best unto my soul I ever heard, since I have been in the ministry: nor can I say, each time that I have heard that dear man, but I have had abundant reason to bless the Lord for the opportunity. I do not speak this, because I am acquainted with the man, to gain his caresses; for that I wish for from no man: nor was I ever in his company in my life; but I am well satisfied he is sent of God, and, in his writings, a real blessing unto my soul. I know of no books, excepting the Bible, so much to
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me as some of his are. I have heard his *Bank of Faith* much despised, and his *Kingdom of Heaven, taken by Prayer*, likewise, by some professing religion; but they have been always such people as I was well satisfied, had little or none of the power of God's truths in their hearts; and what has been said, has always made the man and his books more valuable in my esteem. I have often vindicated his cause, although I never spoke to him in my life; and that I was obliged to do from my own experience, which teaches me to acknowledge and love the man, as sent of God; and that I wish to do, until I have scriptural reason for the reverse. I believe his works have been of very great service to several of my people; and even babes in Jesus can see the divine stamp upon them.

I had not been long in the house where I now live, before one Mrs. *W.* and her maid *Hannah Amos*, and a Mr. *Q.* shopkeepers of *Dunstable*, all fell upon me, with all the force they could muster together, for not falling in with a sermon preached at *Dunstable Houghton*, by *Andrew Fuller*; which, they could not say, had either Jesus Christ, or the divine Spirit in it, nor even mentioned. I heard the sermon, and was determined to think for myself, let them
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all say what they might ; and in the same mind I still remain.

They did insist, he came with Christ's embassy,
I said—If so, he lost it on his passage ;
And forg'd another, whilst upon the road,
That so we might esteem him sent of God.

However, *Hannah Amos*, who was a member of my church, was so tutored, that I could not preach right afterwards ; and the effect that tuition had, was to make her, for a long time, as disorderly a member of a church as I ever saw ; totally neglecting the table of the Lord, and, at length, going off to the Arminian's cell, is now smothered in the sand bank, and gone to make *lies her refuge, and under falsehood to hide herself*. Isaiah, xxviii. 15. Her mistress is a crafty foe against me, and has long been so ; but such foes I need not fear, for God has said, Deut. xxxiii. 29. *Thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee*. Both Mrs. *W.* and her maid *Hannah* must know, they are known to live in the constant practice of whispering and backbiting. Perhaps some will say, "Take care what you say against the children of God." I answer, I am not afraid of speaking against persons I find ranked in God's word, amongst those that are *filled with*

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all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God; despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful. Rom. i. 29, 30, 31. And with those, whisperers and backbiters are placed, and in their end must share, unless saved from such practice. Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death; and will be placed amongst those that not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. Rom. i. 32. It is true, these persons, like all such, have tongues smoother than butter; nevertheless, they are drawn swords. These are tongues devising mischief, Psalm, lii. 2. Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor working deceitfully. It is called the tongue of the crafty, Job, xv. 5. For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou choosest the tongue of the crafty. It is also the tongue of a flatterer, Psalm, v. 9. For there is no faithfulness in their mouth, they flatter with their tongue. First and last of the verse, it is said to be a lying tongue, a false tongue, Psalm, cix. 2. They have spoken against

against me with a lying tongue. Psalm, cxx. 3. What shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? Shall such go to heaven? No: they shall be pierced with sharp arrows of the mighty, heated in coals of juniper. Psalm, lxx. 4. In Psalm, xv. David describes who shall dwell on high; and these are of the number, He that speaketh the truth in his heart; he that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

After I had been in this house a time, a minister called on me, who was to preach on the morrow, and I also, at a publick meeting. He asked me my subject, and I had hard work to tell him; for God had made me pray much for a text, and had not, as yet, given me a comfortable answer. I said, I thought of speaking from Heb. x. 39. He said, he had a plan in his mind, he thought might do, if I could fall in with it. He had a book at home that had such a sermon in it, and if I could take the verse before the text that was wrote from, he would peruse that over, and follow me with the next verse. However, he said, there was another sermon that would do, to follow my text I had mentioned; he would look that over also, and then he

should be ready to follow me in either. This had such an effect on my mind, that, I think, I shall never forget it. I have often pitied that minister, in my mind, and his people also. I saw this was trusting to an arm of flesh; and I could not help blessing God, for the difficulty I had found in getting a subject, which had caused me to pray; and then I prayed, that the Lord would never suffer me to preach any more, if he did not supply me himself, and keep me dependant on him, and deliver me from such a resource; which, blessed be his name! he has done thus far. He often sends me to his bank in the course of a week, but frequently will let me draw nothing until Sabbath morning. I have never been disappointed, when he has so tried me; but often have found it best for me, and the church also, when he has sent me with treasure fresh from the mint. But if a people knew what a minister feels, when God is making him wait as wholly dependant on him, for matter and manner. If they have real grace, they would not fail to pray much unto the Lord for him. Paul says, *Brethren, pray for us.* 2 Thes. iii. 1.

My mind was much tried by the conduct of one Rev. Mr. P. who broke into the fold,

fold, where the Lord made me undershepherd, to steal some sheep; for which purpose, he brought three with him; one, I believe, a serious man, a Mr. C. of *Luton*; the other, a Mr. M. of *Luton*, whose conduct was that of foolish laughing; and that in a most ridiculous manner, talked of by many to this day. As to the other, God knows who or what he was; my friends, in general, thought he was drunk, and, indeed, his face and conduct shewed more of that than grace, by a great deal.

I had, some time before, preached against the covetousness of farmers, who were getting up corn so high, as to distress many families; and glorying in their wickedness, in so doing. I said, I thought there had been many a man hanged at *Tyburn*, that, in point of roguishness, no more deserved it, than some farmers; and so I think still.

Mr. P. it seemed, had, that day he came with his friends, been amongst my friends to furnish himself with all he could, to make mischief. This he had got; and in the meeting, pointing at the pulpit, said—when you get up there, you say so and so; namely, what I have said just before; and that, in a way, to have set every one against me, if he could. I think, this man should have tried to have set a young minister

right, if he saw him wrong, and not to have gloried in wounding him. But the shield of the Lord defended me: nor has my conscience once smote me for what I said: and, I believe, if he had done as he should, he would have preached against such covetousness as well as I, and encouraged me in it. In scripture, it is said, *to be the thorn that choaks the gospel*, Mark, iv. 7; *and they that possess it, are the friends of the world, and so enemies of God*, James, iv. 4. They are called *grinders of the poor*, Isaiah, iii. 14, 15. *The spoil of the poor is in your houses. What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of hosts.* They are the scandal of the church, John, xii. 6. They are oppressors of a nation, Eccle. iv. 1. *And behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power, but they had no comforter.* They are servants of mammon, Matt. vi. 24. And they are heirs of damnation, Job, xxiv. 17, 18. *If one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death. Their portion is cursed in the earth.* Luke, xvi. 23. *And in hell he lift up his eyes.* Should not Mr. P. have warned such of their awful end, as well as I? He did not like my manner of doing it.

it. But a homely clumsy way of faithfulness is better than fawning and deceit : and he cannot be faithful, without preaching the same things he condemned me for, if he doth not say it in the same words. I thought he had known better, than to *make a man an offender for a word* ; and that when for the poor and needy I spoke right things : *and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate ; and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.* Isaiah, xxix. 21.

But, I think, Mr. P. must know, at that time, he acted the crafty man, and not the faithful minister. This I speak not for to hurt or injure my worthy friend, for I esteem him as much as any minister I know ; but for to shew, I do not see need to recant from the truths I delivered. May the Lord bless that man, and me also, with increasing faithfulness, to his glory. I find it is my portion to pass through much tribulation ; the world is up in arms against me, and professors also. But at this I marvel not, though many do ; and some seem as much offended at my cross, as if they were to bear it ; but a cross I must daily carry, of some kind or other, if I walk after Jesus : and so must every one that goes to the kingdom. For the cross is the way to the crown. And to this end Jesus spoke,
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in John, xvi. 33. *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace : in the world ye shall have tribulation, but, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.* Being called a thief, a whoremonger, an heretick, a rascal, and a villian, do but confirm the word the more.

I thought there was one thing they said of old of Christ, that I had no share in ; that was, what he did in the world, was by the spirit of the devil. But I have not escaped this ; for one of *Houghton* said lately, that I, and all my people, were led by the devil. And this is a scriptural proof that I, and my people, be of the Lord, and his household. Matt. x. 25. *If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household.*

Amidst all that men or devils have yet done, the Lord is blessing me with an increasing congregation, and a flourishing church ; and, what is best of all, a heart-felt sense of his love. Some of a neighbouring church, that envy me, say, they think I bewitch the people. That is the best idea they can form of what is done by the power of God, attending his word. I know they do all they can to hinder my usefulness, and that's but little, to their
sorrow ;

sorrow ; though I know them that have been very industrious in spreading of lies : and they are to be found in Jer. xx. 10, 11. *For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him. But the Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one : therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail ; they shall be greatly ashamed ; for they shall not prosper.*

Some ministers have been influenced to pass by my door, and that is well ; for they be such as I do not wish to enter in. But if they think me wrong, they should try to apprise me of my danger. If they believe all they hear reported, it is a mark of a weak mind ; and shews they have weak heads, and half-turned brains. For to believe, without limitation, is a foolish credulity, and very contrary to true Christian love (1 Cor. xiii.) and good sense.

There are many strange things, contrary to the word of God, to be seen amongst ministers in this day. Some time ago, there were some in these parts, that had a thought pop into their minds, that they should preach the gospel in the villages.

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This was nothing new to me ; being what I have always done, as much as I could, ever since I have preached. Walking twenty miles, and preaching three times a day, was my work for a long time. But these, gentlemen, must have a horse to ride on, if they go but four or five miles. How would they like my fate often ? to walk up to the middle of my leg in water and dirt, as I often have, and must do, to carry the gospel to *Edlesborough* and *Totternhoe*. Many times have I been wet to the skin, and scraped flakes of dirt from my stockings with a knife ; and never would take a farthing for village-preaching in my life. But now, we have printed papers sent out to inform us, that such and such ministers are going to preach in villages, in union with the ministers God has sent, if they will, and with all the devil has sent, also. A universal plan of preaching, to universal hearers, I suppose, to take in all mankind, and lump together the children of error, and those of the truth ; children of God, and children of the devil. But this not without pay : for they call out for a fund before they begin to labour ; as much as to say—the people may go without the gospel if we have not a certainty of pay. Thus at once they shew they are pharisees
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and hirelings, that have not right care for the sheep. Nor do I find, after all, that they fill up the expectation they have raised in people's minds; but some, instead of preaching in places where there was no gospel, have run to a few houses where the word has long been preached; but have despised others for going to plough up the fallow ground, and called it imprudent, to preach on greens; as when I went to *Caddington*. Reader, I went to this place, last summer, twice; and what do you think? we were told, the minister of the church paid a number of people, for rioting and preventing my preaching, by making all the noise they could, and then abusing me all the way home, and that on a Lord's day. From such a proceeding, it is easy to find that man's father; you have it in John, viii. 44. *Ye are of your father the devil*: and such works shew it. His mother you find in Revelations, xvii. 3. *Seated upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy*. And no wonder the rabble said, their parson swore as well as they, when we consider from whence he sprung. The name of the woman is *Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth*. This hell-bred brat, in process of
time,

time, was married unto one of this strumpet's daughters, contrary to the laws of God, but more suitable to the devil and the scarlet whore, and has got a very infernal family; so that when I was amongst the people of *Caddington*, considering the church their mother, and the parson their father; I, and my friends, might well have said, to such a father, What hast thou begotten? and to such a mother, What hast thou brought forth? when we see such a generation of vipers, that were come forth of the venerated church. But at this we need not wonder, seeing the whole family are enemies unto God: but that some, professing to be the sent servants of Jesus Christ, should be enemies unto his ministry, word, and preachers, is very awful; and such I find in this day, and am not without opposition from such.

A Reverend Mr. *Davis*, preacher at *Houghton* and *Thorne*, I understand, told one of his friends, that I said in my pulpit, the people might not expect a good sermon; for I should rap and rend all the nonsense together, as I could think of. Did God send you with this message, Sir? Had you the testimony of a good conscience in discharging of it? What said your friend to you? Did he not ask you, if you heard

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me say so? You said, No; but a friend of your's told you, that you could believe. He then said, you ought to say nothing but what you heard yourself. How did this make you look, Sir? Did not the hawking pedlar possess a fallen countenance? if you did not, I think you well might. Surely you have been with Mrs. *Butfield* lately, and learned the trade of backbiting and lying. I have heard much of the trade both this woman and you have drove with my name; for which deeds, I shall, if God spares me, anatomize you from the press. You should not interfere with the trade of doctors, Sir, unless you understand the business. I at once perceive your complaint; you have been struck with an Arminian cudgel, and have got the pollevil: and, as you have called on me, by your conduct, to have to do with the case, I shall search the wound with a Calvinist probe. As I cannot speak right in preaching; pray, Sir, let me hear you give your thoughts on this scripture? Lev. xix. 16. *Thou shalt not go up and down, as a tale-bearer among thy people.* And from it improve the following thoughts: 1st. Your assiduity, going up and down. 2dly. Your popularity, going among the people. 3dly. Your labour and profession,

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bearing tales. And, lastly, the unlawfulness of your calling, thou shalt not do it. Unless you can prove this lawful, you must expect to have the blood of many fall on your head, who, as their leader, encourage them in so unscriptural a thing. Nor can you, with any good grace, preach against backbiting or second-hand lying, because this reply might be given, Physician, heal thyself. What I said in my pulpit, you'll by and by find true; which was, "If any one oppose the truths I was preaching, and my call to preach them, I would bring against them, for the vindication of truth, all the scriptures I could rap and rend together." And you may be sure, *I shall remember Diotrefes, for his deeds which he doth, prating against us with malicious words.* 3 John, 10. You have gone amongst the Arminians for something, Sir, until you have gained a certain degree of perfection. Prov. xxvi. 25. *When he speaketh fair, believe him not; for there are seven abominations in his heart.* And seven abominations, in scripture, is a number of perfection; so that you are perfectly abominable, or else you would not preach, that sinners, in their fallen state, have power to do all God commands; or, that they ought to have been converted years before

before they were. Are these truths, Sir? Should it not be written on your meeting-house doors, Mangling done here, and walking in craftiness?

Mr. C. the watchmaker, has had his soul ensnared, to the wounding of his conscience, and is now sinning against light and knowledge, and conscience; and, if the Lord doth not bring him back, will die a very unfaithful man to himself, and with a very guilty conscience, die when he may. He told me not long ago, he could not say, he thought, you preached the truth; only now and then a tolerable good sermon: at that time, his conscience lashed him for not attending where, he owns, the pure gospel is preached. He had some thoughts of coming to us: he owned, I was sent of God, and preached the gospel, without a doubt: and that was more than he could say of you. Mrs. C. quite scoffed at you, in my hearing, as a man who had changed your sentiments, and did not preach the truth. But Mrs. W. went, and fawned them over. I was blamed for not speaking unto her when she came in, while I was there: but, they may blame on; for I should *not give flattering titles; in so doing, my Maker would soon take me away,* Job, xxxii. 22. However, when I spoke

some truths, respecting the conduct of Davis's friends towards my church, they completely fled to the Arminian cell. God ordered that, to keep me clear of such cheats in religion. Nor do I wish their return until the Lord has stripped them of all Arminianism.

Mr. C. indeed, said, what I had said was wrong, and it would be seen into. That was what I wanted; as I had witness at hand to prove what I said. But, it was thought better on; namely, to let it alone. And now, Sir, until I may have an opportunity of waiting on you, go and hide in your Arminian cell, and comfort yourself at an Hagarean's love-feast. There are many clouds there without water, and wandering stars, with such that have gone *in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward*, Jude, 11. There is a society of such at *Dunstable*, with whom you have entered into alliance; and in so doing, give sanction to those avowed enemies of the truths of God's word. I have, for some time, viewed your proceedings as altogether unscriptural, and such as must be detested by sincere lovers of truth. Your creeping to a Methodist meeting, has for some time past, when I have seen it, made me think of the leering of a dog, who has burnt his tail.

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I will tell you, Sir, I have been preaching at *Dunstable* about ten years, and have known Mrs. *Summerfield* ever since I came, and have every reason to believe, she knows nothing of a work of grace. Ever since I have been here, she has walked as careless, with respect to the privileges of a gospel church, as I ever saw any one: for a time, attending the table of the Lord about once a quarter; after a time, twice in a year; and then, once in a year; and at length, not at all: and this at a time, when she pretended to approve of the minister, ministry, and church; though neither minister, nor church, could approve of her. Her absence from the table of the Lord, and constant neglect of the means of grace, with the neglect of her own house, and leaving her children to be brought up in dancing and swearing, to my certain knowledge, are sufficient proofs, I think, of her graceless state. I find she now says, she don't like me: she says right, I doubt not; and may say, with truth, she don't like the doctrines of God's word, nor the ordinances of his house. She once pretended to see the ordinance of baptism right, and attended unto it, (not in my time, thank the Lord, I had no hand in it) and sat down, with baptized

persons, at the table of the Lord, until apostasy carried her away from God's truth, his house, and any regard to his ordinances; and is now become a nursing mother of error, opening her house for men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth, to exclaim against eternal and personal election, particular redemption, the final perseverance of the saints, and, in a word, all the doctrines of God's word; and introducing, in their stead, the most horrible lies, strenuously contended for, by their deceived hearers; namely, that all people are born into this world with grace in their hearts; also, that every renewed person walks without sin; and, that they do. A plain proof, when they say that they know nothing about truth. 1 John, i. 8. *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.* Such persons can never be before the Lord, in the business of confession, and so can have no pardon; consequently, must be damned, dying in that state. Another thing is, that all will be damned that preach election, and all their hearers also. These are the tenets of your friend *Darlow*.

I preach election, and believe it to be eternal truth, and the foundation of all truth; and my desire is, that the Lord will enable

enable me so to do, unto the end of my life ; and then let me die in the blessed experience of its power and influence, from the Spirit of God to support my soul. Notwithstanding, rebels against the Lord, like vain, mistaken *Darlow*, mount the tribunal, to doom preachers of election, and their followers, to hell.

This wicked, blasphemous, erroneous hypocrite, has, in his sentence, doomed to hell all the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, in the word of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and his true disciples, also ; for his preaching was full of election, and his prayers were offered to his Father, in a special manner, for them that were his elect ones, and not for the world ; and in his doctrine his disciples believed. So then, if *Darlow* be true, Jesus, and his hearers are gone to hell. But let God be true, and *Darlow*, and all like him liars. Jesus is gone to heaven ; and that as the Father's first elect, and head, and representative of all the rest. Heb. vi. 20. *Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.* But Mr. *Davis* is a favourite of *Darlow's*, and so in favour with the enemies of God and truth. He doubts not, Sir, but you are a good man, because you do not preach such a dreadful doctrine as election.

election. He says, no subject of grace can speak against the Methodists ; but if they are all like him, I am sure no subject of grace can speak for them, without going contrary unto the word of God, and against conscience. The society of these mistaken mortals at *Dunstable*, is founded, first, on the encouragement of an apostate, on that is laid a laying of Arminian sand. The edifice is raised with all sorts of materials. Besides the chosen stones of the Lord's spiritual building, any may be admitted, if they desire a ticket ; whether of one description or another ; so that they deny the sovereignty of God in election, oppose the reign of grace, and extol the free will of a fallen sinner from the Lord. Here's babes in grace, whom God will undeceive in his time. And bucks of the first head, mixt together with bastard Baptists, and universal unionists ; and even members of the hell-fire club may get in. These are all huddled together, with dame Procuress leading the van, with *Davis* seeking shelter in this rising edifice. Are you not ashamed of this, Sir ? Do you give proof you are for God and truth ? No, no, you do not, but quite the reverse ; and your friends with you, plainly shew they know not the truth. What do you all go
for ?

for? not for instruction sure; if you do, you must be poor shallow souls indeed. Do you go to vindicate error? Yes, you do; whether you mean it or not. But this was not done when the Methodists went to *Houghton*: it was wrong then, I remember, the Baptists at *Houghton* said, to encourage them. But now they are at *Dunstable*, they flock unto them: and, from several things, I am led to think, not because they think them right, but out of opposition to the Baptist interest at *Dunstable*. What was the matter, Sir, when *Harper* was calling upon all that were there (that stinking pharisee) to go to church, and take the sacrament, and so eat and drink their own damnation, in the state many of them were in? Was this a proof of the preacher being sent of God, or the devil, think you, when he was directing souls to a carnal church parson, for such an important undertaking? Mr. *Queneborough* ran away, did he not, Sir? But why run away? Was he afraid of being lost in the quicksands? If he was not, and all the rest of you, you well may. If they are right, why did you not go and do as you were bid? and, if conscience tells you they are not, you ought not to sanction their wrong: for if you do, I am sure that

that awful blood will fall on you another day, for so doing. Well might you, and another reverend, at the meeting at *St. Albans*, wish for a new translation of the Bible. I have never since looked upon you as any thing, but an empty professor; not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God; and therefore you err. But these things confirm the word of God the more, as in 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. *For the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but, after their own lusts, shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.* And I think you must be far from preaching truth faithfully, while a Mr. *P.* of *Dunstable*, can be willing to hear you. He don't think me worth hearing, and I should wonder if he did, or his dame either: neither would he you, if you were faithful. That must be a strange ministry, that suits a person, sometimes at church, now and then at a meeting, and frequently at no place of worship, through the Lord's day: great part of nights at a card table, and even at five or six o'clock on the Sabbath morning, at a tavern; and a strange minister that corresponds with such, like Reverend Mr. *D.* and Reverend Mr. *W.* Mr. *P.* is pleased
with

with any thing he can get against me ; I know the reason : because I never prophesy good concerning him, but always evil ; and so doth the word of the Lord, and will, while in such a state.

There are some ministers don't like my method of preaching, as well as such characters, and I should be sorry if there was not, as many of them are in this day. It seems, Sir, you are one. But leave me, Sir, a little time, and when with Mr. *P.* again, be faithful, and warn the apostate of his danger. Tell Mr. *W.* to do the same ; and if no good is seen from it, shun such an one : or else, I think, you will appear in a much worse light, than you have it in your power to place me in. Eph. v. 11. *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.* Was a poor person to pursue such a course, I doubt not but they would be shunned, and so should others ; and give up the business of aiming to make that something in me, or my people, which is no such a thing, nor, indeed, nothing to you ; and, at the same time, taking no notice of manifest evils, where you hope for gain. In this straining at gnats, and swallowing of camels, if not left off, I think, sometime you will be choked.

But

But I will now leave my reader, for a time, unto the blessing of the Lord; as I shall, if the Lord permit, come forth anon, with a pamphlet, entitled *Stark Naked Truth*; and also, a second book of *Experience*; as the whole in one, would have swelled this book too large, for many to have bought that wished for it. The freedom I have taken, in making use of the name of *Davis*, and others, arises from the liberty they take with mine; and, in my *Stark Naked Truth*, they may expect I shall do the same. Reader, farewell:

Your's to serve, with such as I have,

FRANCIS HEWS.

DUNSTABLE, Decem. 25,
1798.



NOW

NOW precious Jesus, sovereign Lord of all !
Accept this tribute, though its mean and small ;
My willing heart would cheerful give to thee,
And bless thy name—thou gave it first to me.
O shine upon it with thy rays of grace,
And bid each reader seek thy lovely face ;
Beneath the shadow of thy wing to hide,
And find salvation in thy pierced side.
When I am dead, Lord, may it speak for thee,
And tell the world thy kindness unto me :
Direct it, Lord, to shew how thou dost save,
And glory, to the utmost, thou shall have.
All that's amiss, I own, is only mine,
And all that's right, I own, is wholly thine .
Forgive what's wrong, the right abundant bless :
And call, at length, unto thy heavenly rest,
Author and readers for to dwell with thee,
And sing thy praise through all eternity.

THE END.

T

E R R A T A.

- Page 16, line 13, *for* revered wrath, *read* revealed wrath.
17, — 3, — 50th Psalm, *read* 51st Psalm.
32, — 16, — iuto, *read* into.
34, — 23, — Isaiah 59th, *read* Isaiah 53d.
36, — 11, — independant, *read* independent.
71, — 30, — was to done, *read* was to be done.
73, — 21, — employ mind, *read* employ my mind.
88, — 27, — chaces till, *read* chace still.
121, — 1, — word the Lord, *read* word of the Lord.
183, — 6, — Psalm lxx, *read* Psalm cxx.
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